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*THE BROKEN ROAD.*¹

BY A. E. W. MASON.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CASTING OF THE DIE.

AHMED ISMAIL crossed the threshold behind Shere Ali. He closed the door quietly, bolted and locked it. Then for a space of time the two men stood silent in the darkness, and both listened intently—Ahmed Ismail for the sound of someone stirring in the house, Shere Ali for a quiet secret movement at his elbow. The blackness of the passage gaping as the door opened had roused him to suspicion even while he had been standing in the street. But he had not thought of drawing back. He had entered without fear, just as now he stood without fear drawn up against the wall. There was indeed a smile upon his face. Then he reached out his hand. Ahmed Ismail, who still stood afraid lest any of his family should have been disturbed, suddenly felt a light touch, like a caress, upon his face, and then before he could so much as turn his head, five strong lean fingers gripped him by the throat and tightened.

'Ahmed, I have enemies in Chiltistan,' said Shere Ali, in a whisper and a laugh. 'The son of Abdulla Mohammed, for instance,' and he loosened his grip a little upon Ahmed's throat, but held him still with a straight arm. Ahmed did not struggle. He whispered in reply:

'I am not of your Highness' enemies. Long ago I gave your

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Highness a sign of friendship when I prayed you to pass by the Delhi Gate of Lahore.'

Shere Ali turned Ahmed Ismail towards the inner part of the house and loosed his neck.

'Go forward, then. Light a lamp,' he said, and Ahmed moved noiselessly along the passage. Shere Ali heard the sound of a door opening upstairs, and then a pale light gleamed from above. Shere Ali walked to the end of the passage, and mounting the stairs found Ahmed Ismail in the doorway of a little room with a lighted lamp in his hand.

'I was this moment coming down,' said Ahmed Ismail as he stood aside from the door. Shere Ali walked in. He crossed to the window, which was unglazed but had little wooden shutters. These shutters were closed. Shere Ali opened one and looked out. The room was on the first floor, and the window opened on to a small square courtyard. A movement of Ahmed Ismail's brought him swiftly round. He saw the money-lender on his knees with his forehead to the ground, grovelling before his Prince's feet.

'The time has come, oh my Lord,' he cried in a low, eager voice, and again, 'the time has come.'

Shere Ali looked down and pleasure glowed unwontedly within him. He did not answer, he did not give Ahmed Ismail leave to rise from the ground. He sated his eyes and his vanity with the spectacle of the man's abasement. Even his troubled heart ached with a duller pain.

'I have been a fool,' he murmured, 'I have wasted my years. I have tortured myself for nothing. Yes, I have been a fool.'

A wave of anger swept over him, drowning his pride—anger against himself. He thought of the white people with whom he had lived.

'I sought for a recognition of my equality with them,' he went on. 'I sought it from their men and from their women. I hungered for it like a dog for a bone. They would not give it—neither their men, nor their women. And all the while here were my own people offering their homage.'

He spoke in Pushtu, and Ahmed Ismail drank in every word.

'They wanted a leader, Huzoor,' he said.

'I turned away from them like a fool,' replied Shere Ali, 'while I sought favours from the white women like a slave.'

'Your Highness shall take as a right what you sought for as a favour'

'As a right?' cried Shere Ali, his heart leaping to the incense of Ahmed Ismail's flattery. 'What right?' he asked, suddenly bending his eyes upon his companion.

'The right of a conqueror,' cried Ahmed Ismail, and he bowed himself again at his Prince's feet. He had spoken Shere Ali's wild and secret thought. But whereas Shere Ali had only whispered it to himself, Ahmed Ismail spoke it aloud, boldly and with a challenge in his voice, like one ready to make good his words. An interval of silence followed, a fateful interval as both men knew. Not a sound from without penetrated into that little shuttered room, but to Shere Ali it seemed that the air throbbed and was heavy with unknown things to come. Memories and fancies whirled in his disordered brain without relation to each other or consequence in his thoughts. Now it was the two Englishmen seated side by side behind the ropes and quietly talking of what was 'not good for us,' as though they had the whole of India and the hill-districts besides in their pockets. He saw their faces, and, quietly though he stood and impassive as he looked, he was possessed with a longing to behold them within reach, so that he might strike them and disfigure them for ever. Now it was Violet Oliver as she descended the steps into the great courtyard of the Fort, dainty and provoking from the arched slipper upon her foot to the soft perfection of her hair. He saw her caught into the twilit swirl of pale white faces and so pass from his sight, thinking that at the same moment she passed from his life. Then it was the Viceroy in his box at the racecourse and all Calcutta upon the lawn which swept past his eyes. He saw the Eurasian girls prinked out in their best frocks to lure into marriage some unwary Englishman. And then it was Colonel Dewes, the man who had lost his place amongst his own people, even as he, Shere Ali, had himself. A half-contemptuous smile of pity for a moment softened the hard lines of his mouth as he thought upon that forlorn and stooping man taking his loneliness with him into Cashmere.

'That shall not be my way,' he said aloud, and the lines of his mouth hardened again. And once more before his eyes rose the vision of Violet Oliver.

Ahmed Ismail had risen to his feet and stood watching his Prince with eager, anxious eyes. Shere Ali crossed to the table and turned down the lamp, which was smoking. Then he went to the window and thrust the shutters open. He turned round suddenly upon Ahmed.

'Were you ever in Mecca?'

'Yes, Huzoor,' and Ahmed's eyes flashed at the question.

'I met three men from Chiltistan on the Lowari Pass. They were going down to Kurachi. I, too, must make the pilgrimage to Mecca.'

He stood watching the flame of the lamp as he spoke, and spoke in a monotonous dull voice, as though what he said were of little importance. But Ahmed Ismail listened to the words, not the voice, and his joy was great. It was as though he heard a renegade acknowledge once more the true faith.

'Afterwards, Huzoor,' he said, significantly. 'Afterwards.' Shere Ali nodded his head.

'Yes, afterwards. When we have driven the white people down from the hills into the plains.'

'And from the plains into the sea,' cried Ahmed Ismail. 'The angels will fight by our side—so the Mullahs have said—and no man who fights with faith will be hurt. All will be invulnerable. It is written, and the Mullahs have read the writing and translated it through Chiltistan.'

'Is that so?' said Shere Ali, and as he put the question there was an irony in his voice which Ahmed Ismail was quick to notice. But Shere Ali put it yet a second time, after a pause, and this time there was no trace of irony.

'But I will not go alone,' he said, suddenly raising his eyes from the flame of the lamp and looking towards Ahmed Ismail.

Ahmed did not understand. But also he did not interrupt, and Shere Ali spoke again, with a smile slowly creeping over his face.

'I will not go alone to Mecca. I will follow the example of Sirdar Khan.'

The saying was still a riddle to Ahmed Ismail.

'Sirdar Khan, your Highness?' he said. 'I do not know him.'

Shere Ali turned his eyes again upon the flame of the lamp, and the smile broadened upon his face, a thing not pleasant to see. He wetted his lips with the tip of his tongue and told his story.

'Sirdar Khan is dead long since,' he said, 'but he was one of the five men of the bodyguard of Nana, who went into the Bibigarh at Cawnpore on July 12 of the year 1857. Have you heard of that year, Ahmed Ismail, and of the month and of the day? Do you know what was done that day in the Bibigarh at Cawnpore?'

Ahmed Ismail watched the light grow in Shere Ali's eyes, and a smile crept into his face, too.

'Huzoor, Huzoor,' he said, in a whisper of delight. He knew very well what had happened in Cawnpore, though he knew nothing of the month or the day, and cared little in what year it had happened.

'There were 206 women and children, English women, English children, shut up in the Bibigarh. At five o'clock—and it is well to remember the hour, Ahmed Ismail—at five o'clock in the evening the five men of the Nana's bodyguard went into the Bibigarh and the doors were closed upon them. It was dark when they came out again and shut the doors behind them, saying that all were dead. But it was not true. There was an Englishwoman alive in the Bibigarh, and Sirdar Khan came back in the night and took her away.'

'And she is in Mecca now?' cried Ahmed Ismail.

'Yes. An old, old woman,' said Shere Ali, dwelling upon the words with a quiet, cruel pleasure. He had the picture clear before his eyes, he saw it in the flame of the lamp at which he gazed so steadily—an old, wizened, shrunken woman, living in a bare room, friendless and solitary, so old that she had even ceased to be aware of her unhappiness, and so coarsened out of all likeness to the young, bright English girl who had once dwelt in Cawnpore, that even her own countryman had hardly believed she was of his race. He set another picture side by side with that—the picture of Violet Oliver as she turned to him on the steps and said, 'This is really good-bye.' And in his imagination, he saw the one picture merge and coarsen into the other, the dainty trappings of lace and ribbons change to a shapeless cloak. It would be a just punishment, he said to himself. Anger against her was as a lust at his heart. He had lost sight of her kindness, and her pity; he desired her and hated her in the same breath.

'Are you married, Ahmed Ismail?' he asked.

Ahmed Ismail smiled.

'Truly, Huzoor.'

'Do you carry your troubles to your wife? Is she your companion as well as your wife? Your friend as well as your mistress?'

Ahmed Ismail laughed.

'Yet that is what the English women are,' said Shere Ali.

'Perhaps, Huzoor,' replied Ahmed, cunningly, 'it is for that reason they take and do not give.'

He came a little nearer to his Prince.

‘Where is she, Huzoor?’

Shere Ali was startled by the question out of his dreams. For it had been a dream, this thought of capturing Violet Oliver and carrying her out of her life into his. He had played with it, knowing it to be a fancy. There had been no settled plan, no settled intention in his mind. But to-night he was carried away. It appeared to him there was a possibility his dream might come true. It seemed so not alone to him but to Ahmed Ismail too. He turned and gazed at the man, wondering whether Ahmed Ismail played with him or not. But Ahmed bore the scrutiny without a shadow of embarrassment.

‘Is she in India, Huzoor?’

Shere Ali hesitated. Some memory of the lessons learned in England was still alive within him, bidding him guard his secret. But the memory was not strong enough. He bowed his head in assent.

‘In Calcutta?’

‘Yes.’

‘Your Highness shall point her out to me one evening as she drives in the Maidan,’ said Ahmed Ismail, and again Shere Ali answered—

‘Yes.’

But he caught himself back the next moment. He flung away from Ahmed Ismail with a harsh outburst of laughter.

‘But this is all folly,’ he cried. ‘We are not in the days of the uprising,’ for thus he termed now what a month ago he would have called ‘The Mutiny.’ ‘Cawnpore is not Calcutta,’ and he turned in a gust of fury upon Ahmed Ismail. ‘Do you play with me, Ahmed Ismail?’

‘Upon my head, no! Light of my life, hope of my race, who would dare?’ and he was on the ground at Shere Ali’s feet. ‘Do I indeed speak follies? I pray your Highness to bethink you that the summer sets its foot upon the plains. She will go to the hills, Huzoor. She will go to the hills. And your people are not fools. They have cunning to direct their strength. See, your Highness, is there a regiment in Peshawur whose rifles are safe, guard them howsoever carefully they will? Every week they are brought over the hills into Chiltistan that we may be ready for the Great Day,’ and Ahmed Ismail chuckled to himself. ‘A month ago, Huzoor, so many rifles had been stolen that a regiment in

camp locked their rifles to their tent poles, and so thought to sleep in peace. But on the first night the cords of the tents were cut, and while the men waked and struggled under the folds of canvas, the tent poles with the rifles chained to them were carried away. All those rifles are now in Kohara. Surely, Huzoor, if they can steal the rifles from the middle of a camp, they can steal a weak girl among the hills.'

Ahmed Ismail waited in suspense, with his forehead bowed to the ground, and when the answer came he smiled. He had made good use of this unexpected inducement which had been given to him. He knew very well that nothing but an unlikely chance would enable him to fulfil his promise. But that did not matter. The young Prince would point out the English woman in the Maidan, and at a later time when all was ready in Chiltistan, a fine and obvious attempt should be made to carry her off. The pretence might, if occasion served, become a reality to be sure, but the attempt must be as public as possible. There must be no doubt as to its author. Shere Ali, in a word, must be committed beyond any possibility of withdrawal. Ahmed Ismail himself would see to that.

'Very well. I will point her out to you,' said Shere Ali, and Ahmed Ismail rose to his feet. He waited before his master, silent and respectful. Shere Ali had no suspicion that he was being jockeyed by that respectful man into a hopeless rebellion. He had indeed lost sight of the fact that the rebellion must be hopeless.

'When,' he asked, 'will Chiltistan be ready?'

'As soon as the harvest is got in,' replied Ahmed Ismail.

Shere Ali nodded his head.

'You and I will go northwards to-morrow,' he said.

'To Kohara?' asked Ahmed Ismail.

'Yes.'

For a little while Ahmed Ismail was silent. Then he said: 'If your Highness will allow his servant to offer a contemptible word of advice —'

'Speak,' said Shere Ali.

'Then it might be wise, perhaps, to go slowly to Kohara. Your Highness has enemies in Chiltistan. The news of the melons and the bags of grain is spread abroad, and jealousy is aroused. For there are some who wish to lead when they should serve.'

'The son of Abdulla Mohammed,' said Shere Ali.

Ahmed Ismail shrugged his shoulders as though the son of

Abdulla Mohammed were of little account. There was clearly another in his mind, and Shere Ali was quick to understand him.

'My father,' he said quietly. He remembered how his father had received him with his Snider rifle cocked and laid across his knees. This time the Snider would be fired if ever Shere Ali came within range of its bullet. But it was unlikely that he would get so far, unless he went quickly and secretly at an appointed time.

'I had a poor foolish thought,' said Ahmed Ismail, 'not worthy a moment's consideration by my Prince.'

Shere Ali broke in impatiently upon his words.

'Speak it.'

'If we travelled slowly to Ajmere, we should come to that town at the time of pilgrimage. There in secret the final arrangements can be made, so that the blow may fall upon an uncovered head.'

'The advice is good,' said Shere Ali. But he spoke reluctantly. He wanted not to wait at all. He wanted to strike now while his anger was at its hottest. But undoubtedly the advice was good.

Ahmed Ismail, carrying the light in his hand, went down the stairs before Shere Ali and along the passage to the door. There he extinguished the lamp and cautiously drew back the bolts. He looked out and saw that the street was empty.

'There is no one,' he said, and Shere Ali passed out to the mouth of the blind alley and turned to the left towards the Maidan. He walked thoughtfully and did not notice a head rise cautiously above the side of a cart in the mouth of the alley. It was the head of the reporter of *Bande Mataram*, whose copy would be assuredly too late for the press.

Shere Ali walked on through the streets. It was late, and he met no one. There had come upon him during the last hours a great yearning for his own country. He ran over in his mind, with a sense of anger against himself, the miserable wasted weeks in Calcutta—the nights in the glaring bars and halls, the friends he had made, the depths in which he had wallowed. He came to the Maidan, and, standing upon that empty plain, gazed round on the great silent city. He hated it, with its statues of Viceroys and soldiers, its houses of rich merchants, its insolence. He would lead his own people against all that it symbolised. Perhaps, some day, when all the frontier was in flame, and the British power rolled back, he and his people might pour down from the hills and knock even against the gates of Calcutta. Men from the hills had

come down to Tonk, and Bhopal, and Rohilcund, and Rampur, and founded kingdoms for themselves. Why should he and his not push on to Calcutta ?

He bared his head to the night wind. He was uplifted, and fired with mad impossible dreams. All that he had learned was of little account to him now. It might be that the English, as Colonel Dewes had said, had something of an army. Let them come to Chiltistan and prove their boast.

'I will go north to the hills,' he cried, and with a shock he understood that, after all, he had recovered his own place. The longing at his heart was for his own country—for his own people.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SHERE ALI'S PILGRIMAGE.

THERE were times when Ralston held aloft his hands and cursed the Indian administration by all his gods. But he never did so with a more whole-hearted conviction than on the day when he received word that Linforth had been diverted to Rawal Pindi, in order that he might take up purely military duties. It took Ralston just seven months to secure his release, and it was not until the early days of autumn had arrived that Linforth at last reached Peshawur. A landau, with a coachman and groom in scarlet liveries, was waiting for him at the station, and he drove along the broad road through the cantonment to Government House. As the carriage swung in at the gates, a tall, thin man came from the croquet-ground on the left. He joined Dick in the porch.

'You are Mr. Linforth ?' he said.

'Yes.'

For a moment a pair of grey, tired eyes ran Dick over from head to foot in a careless scrutiny. Apparently, however, the scrutiny was favourable.

'I am the Chief Commissioner. I am glad that you have come. My sister will give you some tea, and afterwards, if you are not tired, we might go for a ride together. You would like to see your room first.'

Ralston spoke with his usual indifference. There was no intonation in his voice which gave to any one sentence a particular

meaning ; and for a particular meaning Dick Linforth was listening with keen ears. He followed Ralston across the hall to his room, and disappointment gained upon him with every step. He had grown familiar with disappointment of late years, but he was still young enough in years and spirit to expect the end of disappointment with each change in his fortunes. He had expected it when the news of his appointment had reached him in Calcutta, and disappointment had awaited him in Bombay. He had expected it again when, at last, he was sent from Rawal Pindi to Peshawur. All the way up the line he had been watching the far hills of Cashmere, and repeating to himself, 'At last ! At last !'

The words had been a song at his heart, turned to the jolt and rhythm of the wheels. Ralston of Peshawur had asked for him. So much he had been told. This longing had explained to him why Ralston of Peshawur had asked for him, and easily he had believed the explanation. He was a Linforth, one of the Linforths of the Road. Great was his pride. He would not have bartered his position to be a General in command of a division. Ralston had sent for him because of his hereditary title to work upon the Road, the broad, permanent, graded Road which was to make India safe.

And now he walked behind a tired and indifferent Commissioner, whose very voice officialdom had made phlegmatic, and on whose aspect was writ large the habit of routine. In this mood he sat, while Miss Ralston prattled to him about the social doings of Peshawur, the hunt, the golf ; and in this mood he rode out with Ralston to the Gate of the City.

They passed through the main street, and, turning to the right, ascended to an archway, above which rose a tower. At the archway they dismounted and climbed to the roof of the tower. Peshawur, with its crowded streets, its open bazaars, its balconied houses of mud bricks built into wooden frameworks, lay mapped beneath them. But Linforth's eyes travelled over the trees and the gardens northwards and eastwards, to where the foothills of the Himalayas were coloured with the violet light of evening.

'Linforth,' Ralston cried. He was leaning on the parapet at the opposite side of the tower, and Dick crossed and leaned at his side.

'It was I who had you sent for,' said Ralston in his dull voice. 'When you were at Chatham, I mean. I worried them in Calcutta until they sent for you.'

Dick took his elbows from the parapet and stood up. His face took life and fire, there came a brightness as of joy into his eyes. After all, then, this time he was not to be disappointed.

'I wanted you to come to Peshawur straight from Bombay six months ago,' Ralston went on. 'But I counted without the Indian Government. They brought you out to India, at my special request, for a special purpose, and then, when they had got you, they turned you over to work which anyone else could have done. So six months have been wasted. But that's their little way.'

'You have special work for me,' said Linforth quietly enough, though his heart was beating quickly in his breast. An answer came which still quickened its beatings.

'Work that you alone can do,' Ralston replied gravely. But he was a man who had learned to hope for little, and to expect discouragements as his daily bread, and he added :

'That is, if you can do it.'

Linforth did not answer at once. He was leaning with his elbows on the parapet, and he raised a hand to the side of his face, that side on which Ralston stood. And so he remained, shutting himself in with his thoughts, and trying to think soberly. But his head whirled. Below him lay the city of Peshawur. Behind him the plains came to an end, and straight up from them, like cliffs out of the sea, rose the dark hills, brown and grey and veined with white. Here on this tower of Northern India, the long dreams, dreamed for the first time on the Sussex Downs, and nursed since in every moment of leisure—in Alpine huts in days of storm, in his own quarters at Chatham—had come to their fulfilment.

'I have lived for this work,' he said in a low voice which shook ever so little, try as he might to quiet it. 'Ever since I was a boy I have lived for it, and trained myself for it. It is the Road.'

Linforth's evident emotion came upon Ralston as an unexpected thing. He was carried back suddenly to his own youth, and was surprised to recollect that he, too, had once cherished great plans. He saw himself as he was to-day, and, side by side with that disillusioned figure, he saw himself as he had been in his youth. A smile of friendliness came over his face.

'If I had shut my eyes,' he said, 'I should have thought it was your father who was speaking.'

Linforth turned quickly to Ralston.

'My father. You knew him?'

'Yes.'

'I never did,' said Dick regretfully.

Ralston nodded his head and continued.

'Twenty-six years ago we were here in Peshawur together. We came up on to the top of this tower. He was like you. He was dreaming night and day of the Great Road through Chiltistan to the foot of the Hindu Kush. Look!' and Ralston pointed down to the roof-tops of the city, whereon the women and children worked and played. For the most part they were enclosed within brick walls, and the two men looked down into them as you might look in the rooms of a doll's house by taking off the lid. Ralston pointed to one such open chamber just beneath their eyes. An awning supported on wooden pillars sheltered one end of it, and between two of these pillars a child swooped backwards and forwards in a swing. In the open, a woman seated upon a string charpoy rocked a cradle with her foot, while her hands were busy with a needle, and an old woman, with a black shawl upon her shoulders and head, sat near by inactive. But she was talking. For at times the younger woman would raise her head, and though at that distance no voice could be heard, it was evident that she was answering. 'I remember noticing that roof when your father and I were talking up here all those years ago. There was just the same family group as you see now. I remember it quite clearly, for your father went away to Chiltistan the next day, and never came back. It was the last time I saw him, and we were both young and full of all the great changes we were to bring about.' He smiled, half it seemed in amusement, half in regret. 'We talked of the Road, of course. Well, there's just one change. The old woman sitting there with the shawl upon her shoulders now, was in those days the young woman rocking the cradle and working with her needle. That's all. Troubles there have been, disturbances, an expedition or two—but there's no real change. Here are you talking of the Road just as your father did, not ambitious for yourself,' he explained with a kindly smile which illumined his whole face, 'but ambitious for the Road, and the Road still stops at Kohara.'

'But it will go on—now,' cried Linforth.

'Perhaps,' said Ralston slowly. Then he stood up and confronted Linforth.

'It was not that you might carry on the Road that I brought you out from England,' he said. 'On the contrary.'

Once more disappointment seized upon Dick Linforth, and he found it all the more bitter in that he had believed a minute since that his dreams were to be fulfilled. He looked down upon Peshawur, and the words which Ralston had lately spoken, half in amusement, half with regret, suddenly took for him their full meaning. Was it true that there was no change but the change from the young woman to the old one, from enthusiasm to acquiescence? He was young, and the possibility chilled him and even inspired him with a kind of terror. Was he to carry the Road no further than his father had done? Would another Linforth in another generation come to the tower in Peshawur with hopes as high as his and with the like futility?

'On the contrary?' he asked. 'Then why?'

'That you might stop the Road from going on,' said Ralston quietly.

In the very midst of his disappointment Linforth realised that he had misjudged his companion. Here was no official, here was a man. The attitude of indifference had gone, the air of lassitude with it. Here was a man quietly exacting the hardest service which it was in his power to exact, claiming it as a right, and yet making it clear by some subtle sympathy that he understood very well all that the service would cost to the man who served.

'I am to hinder the making of that Road?' cried Linforth.

'You are to do more. You are to prevent it.'

'I have lived so that it should be made.'

'So you have told me,' said Ralston quietly, and Dick was silent. With each quiet sentence Ralston had become more and more the dominating figure. He was so certain, so assured. Linforth recognised him no longer as the man to argue with; but as the representative of Government which overrides predilections, sympathies, ambitions, and bends its servants to their duty.

'I will tell you more,' Ralston continued. 'You alone can prevent the extension of the Road. I believe it—I know it. I sent to England for you, knowing it. Do your duty, and it may be that the Road will stop at Kohara—an unfinished, broken thing. Flinch, and the Road runs straight to the Hindu Kush. You will have your desire; but you will have failed.'

There was something implacable and relentless in the tone and the words. There was more, too. There was an intimation, subtly yet most clearly conveyed, that Ralston who spoke had

in his day trampled his ambitions and desires beneath his feet in service to the Government, and asked no more now from Linforth than he himself had in his turn performed. It was this last intimation which subdued the protests in Linforth's mind. He looked at the worn face of the Commissioner, then his eyes were lifted and swept the horizon. The violet light upon the hills had lost its brightness and its glamour. In the far distance the hills themselves were withdrawn. Somewhere in that great barrier to the east was the gap of the Malakand Pass, where the Road now began. Linforth turned away from the hills towards Peshawur.

'What must I do?' he asked simply.

Ralston nodded his head. His attitude relaxed, his voice lost its dominating note.

'What you have to understand is this,' he explained. 'To drive the Road through Chiltistan means war. It would be the cause of war if we insisted upon it now, just as it was the cause of war when your father went up from Peshawur twenty-six years ago. Or it might be the consequence of war. If the Chiltis rose in arms, undoubtedly we should carry it on to secure control of the country in the future. Well, it is the last alternative that we are face to face with now.'

'The Chiltis might rise!' cried Linforth.

'There is that possibility,' Ralston returned. 'We don't mean on our own account to carry on the Road; but the Chiltis might rise.'

'And how should I prevent them?' asked Dick Linforth in perplexity.

'You know Shere Ali,' said Ralston.

'Yes.'

'You are a friend of his.'

'Yes.'

'A great friend. His chief friend.'

'Yes.'

'You have some control over him.'

'I think so,' said Linforth.

'Very well,' said Ralston. 'You must use that control.'

Linforth's perplexity increased. That danger should come from Shere Ali—here was something quite incredible. He remembered their long talks, their joint ambition. A day passed in the hut in the Promontoire of the Meige stood out vividly in his memories. He saw the snow rising in a swirl of white over the

Brèche de la Meige, that gap in the rock-wall between the Meige and the Rateau, and driving down the glacier towards the hut. He remembered the eagerness, the enthusiasm of Shere Ali.

'But he's loyal,' Linforth cried. 'There is no one in India more loyal.'

'He was loyal, no doubt,' said Ralston, with a shrug of his shoulders, and beginning with his first meeting with Shere Ali in Lahore, he told Linforth all that he knew of the history of the young Prince.

'There can be no doubt,' he said, 'of his disloyalty,' and he recounted the story of the melons and the bags of grain. 'Since then he has been intriguing in Calcutta.'

'Is he in Calcutta now?' Linforth asked.

'No,' said Ralston. 'He left Calcutta just about the time when you landed in Bombay. And there is something rather strange—something, I think, very disquieting in his movements since he left Calcutta. I have had him watched, of course. He came north with one of his own countrymen, and the pair of them have been seen at Cawnpore, at Lucknow, at Delhi.'

Ralston paused. His face had grown very grave, very troubled.

'I am not sure,' he said slowly. 'It is difficult, however long you stay in India, to get behind these fellows' minds, to understand the thoughts and the motives which move them. And the longer you stay, the more difficult you realise it to be. But it looks to me as if Shere Ali had been taken by his companion on a sort of pilgrimage.'

Linforth started.

'A pilgrimage!' and he added slowly, 'I think I understand. A pilgrimage to all the places which could most inflame the passions of a native against the English race,' and then he broke out in protest. 'But it's impossible. I know Shere Ali. It's not reasonable——'

Ralston interrupted him upon the utterance of the word.

'Reasonable!' he cried. 'You are in India. Do ever white men act reasonably in India?' and he turned with a smile. 'There was a great uncle of yours in the days of the John Company, wasn't there? Your father told me about him here on this tower. When his time was up, he sent his money home and took his passage, and then came back—came back to the mountains and disappeared. Very likely he may be sitting somewhere beyond that barrier of hills by a little shrine to this hour, an old, old man, revered as a

saint, with a strip of cloth about his loins, and forgetful of the days when he ruled a district in the Plains. I should not wonder. It's not a reasonable country.'

Ralston, indeed, was not far out in his judgment. Ahmed Ismail had carried Shere Ali off from Calcutta. He had taken him first of all to Cawnpore, and had led him up to the gate of the enclosure, wherein stands the Bibigarh, where the women and children were massacred, and the well into which their bodies were flung. An English soldier turned them back from that enclosure, refusing them admittance. Ahmed Ismail, knowing well that it would be so, smiled quietly under his moustache; but Shere Ali angrily pointed to some English tourists who were within the enclosure.

'Why should we remain outside?' he asked.

'They are Belati,' said Ahmed Ismail in a smooth voice as they moved away. 'They are foreigners. The place is sacred to the foreigners. It is Indian soil; but the Indian may not walk on it; no, not though he were born next door. Yet why should we grumble or complain? We are the dirt beneath their feet. We are dogs and sons of dogs, and a hireling will turn our Princes from the gate lest the soles of our shoes should defile their sacred places. And are they not right, Huzoor?' he asked cunningly. 'Since we submit to it, since we cringe at their indignities and fawn upon them for their insults, are they not right?'

'Why, that's true, Ahmed Ismail,' replied Shere Ali bitterly. He was in the mood to make much of any trifle. This reservation of the enclosure at Cawnpore was but one sign of the overbearing arrogance of the foreigners, the Belati—the men from over the sea. He had fawned upon them himself in the days of his folly.

'But turn a little, Huzoor,' Ahmed whispered in his ear, and led him back. 'Look! There is the Bibigarh where the women were imprisoned. That is the house. Through that opening Sirdar Khan and his four companions went—and shut the door behind them. In that room the woman of Mecca knelt and prayed for mercy. Come away, Huzoor. We have seen. Those were days when there were *men* upon the plains of India.'

And Shere Ali broke out with a fierce oath.

'Amongst the hills, at all events, there are men to-day. There is no sacred ground for them in Chiltistan.'

'Not even the Road?' asked Ahmed Ismail; and Shere Ali stopped dead, and stared at his companion with startled eyes. He

walked away in silence after that ; and for the rest of that day he said little to Ahmed Ismail, who watched him anxiously. At night, however, Ahmed was justified of his policy. For Shere Ali appeared before him in the white robes of a Mohammedan. Up till then he had retained the English dress. Now he had discarded it. Ahmed Ismail fell at his feet, and bowed himself to the ground.

'My Lord ! My Lord !' he cried, and there was no simulation in his outburst of joy. 'Would that your people could behold you now ! But we have much to see first. To-morrow we go to Lucknow.'

Accordingly the two men travelled the next day to Lucknow. Shere Ali was led up under the broken archway by Evans's Battery into the grounds of the Residency. He walked with Ahmed Ismail at his elbow on the green lawns where the golden-crested hoopoes flashed in the sunlight and the ruined buildings stood agape to the air. They looked peaceful enough, as they strolled from one battery to another, but all the while Ahmed Ismail preached his sermon into Shere Ali's ears. There Lawrence had died ; here at the top of the narrow lane had stood Johannes' house whence Nebo the Nailer had watched day after day with his rifle in his hand. Hardly a man, be he never so swift, could cross that little lane from one quarter of the Residency to another, so long as daylight lasted and so long as Nebo the Nailer stood behind the shutters of Johannes' house. Shere Ali was fired by the story of that siege. By so little was the garrison saved. Ahmed Ismail led him down to a corner of the grounds and once more a sentry barred the way.

'This is the graveyard,' said Ahmed Ismail, and Shere Ali, looking up, stepped back with a look upon his face which Ahmed Ismail did not understand.

'Huzoor !' he said anxiously, and Shere Ali turned upon him with an imperious word.

'Silence, dog !' he cried. 'Stand apart. I wish to be alone.'

His eyes were on the little church with the trees and the wall girding it in. At the side a green meadow, with high trees, had the look of a playing-ground—the playing-ground of some great public school in England. Shere Ali's eyes took in the whole picture, and then saw it but dimly through a mist. For the little church, though he had never seen it before, was familiar and most moving. It was a model of the Royal Chapel at Eton, and, in spite of himself, as he gazed the tears filled his eyes and the memory of his schooldays ached at his heart. He yearned to be back once

more in the shadow of that chapel with his comrades and his friends. Not yet had he wholly forgotten ; he was softened out of his bitterness ; the burden of his jealousy and his anger fell for awhile from his shoulders. When he rejoined Ahmed Ismail, he bade him follow and speak no word. He drove back to the town, and then only he spoke to Ahmed Ismail.

'We will go from Lucknow to-day,' he said. 'I will not sleep in this town.'

'As your Highness wills,' said Ahmed Ismail humbly, and he went into the station and bought tickets for Delhi. It was on a Thursday morning that the pair reached that town ; and that day Ahmed Ismail had an unreceptive listener for his sermons. The monument before the Post Office, the tablets on the arch of the arsenal, even the barracks in the gardens of the Moghul Palace fired no antagonism in the Prince, who so short a time ago had been a boy at Eton. The memories evoked by the little church at Lucknow had borne him company all night and still clung to him that day. Only twice was he really roused.

The first instance took place when he was driving along the Chandni Chauk, the straight broad tree-fringed street which runs from the Lahore Gate to the Fort. Ahmed Ismail sat in front of him, and, leaning forward, he pointed to a tree and to a tall house in front of the tree.

'My lord,' said he, 'could that tree speak, what groans would one hear !'

'Why ?' said Shere Ali listlessly.

'Listen, your Highness,' said Ahmed Ismail. Like the rest of his countrymen, he had a keen love for a story. And the love was the keener when he himself had the telling of it. He sat up alertly. 'In that house lived an Englishman of high authority. He escaped when Delhi was seized by the faithful. He came back when Delhi was recaptured by the infidels. And there he sat with an English officer, at his window, every morning from eight to nine. And every morning from eight to nine every native who passed his door was stopped and hanged upon that tree, while he looked on. Huzoor, there was no inquiry. It might be some peaceable merchant, some poor man from the countryside. What did it matter ? There was a lesson to be taught to this city. And so whoever walked down the Chandni Chauk during that hour dangled from those branches. Huzoor, for a week this went on—for a whole week.'

The story was current in Delhi. Ahmed Ismail found it to his hand, and Shere Ali did not question it. He sat up erect, and something of the fire which this last day had been extinct kindled again in his sombre eyes. Later on he drove along the sinuous road on the top of the ridge, and as he looked over Delhi, hidden amongst its foliage, he saw the great white dome of the Jumma Musjid rising above the tree-tops, almost like a balloon. 'The Mosque,' he said, standing up in his carriage. 'To-morrow we will worship there.'

Before noon the next day he mounted the steep broad flight of steps and passed under the red sandstone arch into the vast enclosure. He performed his ablutions at the fountain, and, kneeling upon the marble tiles, waited for the priest to ascend the ladder on to the wooden platform. He knelt with Ahmed Ismail at his side, in the open, amongst the lowliest. In front of him rows of worshippers knelt and bowed their foreheads to the tiles—rows and rows covering the enclosure up to the arches of the mosque itself. There were others too—rows and rows within the arches, in the dusk of the mosque itself, and from man to man emotion passed like a spark upon the wind. The crowd grew denser, there came a suspense, a tension. It gained upon all, it laid its clutch upon Shere Ali. He ceased to think, even upon his injuries, he was possessed with expectancy. And then a man kneeling beside him interrupted his prayers and began to curse fiercely beneath his breath.

'May they burn, they and their fathers and their children, to the last generation!' And he added epithets of a surprising ingenuity. The while he looked backwards over his shoulder.

Shere Ali followed his example. He saw at the back of the enclosure, in the galleries which surmounted the archway and the wall, English men and English women waiting. Shere Ali's blood boiled at the sight. They were laughing, talking. Some of them had brought sandwiches and were eating their lunch. Others were taking photographs with their cameras. They were waiting for the show to begin.

Shere Ali followed the example of his neighbour and cursed them. All his anger kindled again and quickened into hatred. They were so careful of themselves, so careless of others!

'Not a Mohammedan,' he cried to himself, 'must set foot in their graveyard at Lucknow, but they come to our mosque as to a show.'

Suddenly he saw the priest climb the ladder on to the high wooden platform in front of the central arch of the mosque and bow his forehead to the floor. His voice rang out resonant and clear and confident over that vast assemblage.

'There is only one God.'

And a shiver passed across the rows of kneeling men, as though unexpectedly a wind had blown across a ripe field of corn. Shere Ali was moved like the rest, but all the while at the back of his mind there was the thought of those white people in the galleries.

'They are laughing at us, they are making a mock of us, they think we are of no account.' And fiercely he called upon his God, the God of the Mohammedans, to root them out from the land and cast them as weeds in the flame.

The priest stood up erect upon the platform, and with a vibrating voice, now plaintive and conveying some strange sense of loneliness, now loud in praise, now humble in submission, he intoned the prayers. His voice rose and sank, reverberating back over the crowded courtyard from the walls of the mosque. Shere Ali prayed too, but he prayed silently, with all the fervour of a fanatic, that it might be his hand which should drive the English to their ships upon the sea.

When he rose and came out from the mosque he turned to Ahmed Ismail.

'There are some of my people in Delhi?'

Ahmed Ismail bowed.

'Let us go to them,' said Shere Ali; he sought refuge amongst them from the thought of those people in the galleries. Ahmed Ismail was well content with the results of his pilgrimage. Shere Ali, as he paced the streets of Delhi with a fierce rapt look in his eyes, had the very aspect of a Ghazi fresh from the hills and bent upon murder and immolation.

CHAPTER XXIV.

NEWS FROM AJMERE.

SOMETHING of this pilgrimage Ralston understood; and what he understood he explained to Dick Linforth on the top of the tower at Peshawur. Linforth, however, was still perplexed, still unconvinced.

'I can't believe it,' he cried; 'I know Shere Ali so well.'

Ralston shook his head.

'England overlaid the real man with a pretty varnish,' he said. 'That's all it ever does. And the varnish peels off easily when the man comes back to an Indian sun. There's not one of these people from the hills but has in him the makings of a fanatic. It's a question of circumstances whether the fanaticism comes to the top or not. Given the circumstances, neither Eton, nor Oxford, nor all the schools and universities rolled into one would hinder the relapse.'

'But why?' exclaimed Linforth. 'Why should Shere Ali have relapsed?'

'Disappointment here, flattery in England—there are many reasons. Usually there's a particular reason.'

'And what is that?' asked Linforth.

'The love of a white woman.'

Ralston was aware that Linforth at his side started. He started ever so slightly. But Ralston was on the alert. He made no sign, however, that he had noticed anything.

'I know that reason held good in Shere Ali's case,' Ralston went on; and there came a change in Linforth's voice. It grew rather stern, rather abrupt.

'Why? Has he talked?'

'Not that I know of. Nevertheless, I am sure that there was one who played a part in Shere Ali's life,' said Ralston. 'I have known it ever since I first met him—more than a year ago on his way northwards to Chiltistan. He stopped for a day at Lahore and rode out with me. I told him that the Government expected him to marry as soon as possible, and settle down in his own country. I gave him that advice deliberately. You see I wanted to find out. And I did find out. His consternation, his anger, answered me clearly enough. I have no doubt that there was someone over there in England—a woman, perhaps an innocent woman who had been merely careless—perhaps—'

But he did not finish the sentence. Linforth interrupted him before he had time to complete it. And he interrupted without flurry or any sign of agitation.

'There was a woman,' he said. 'But I don't think she was thoughtless. I don't see how she could have known that there was any danger in her friendliness. For she was merely friendly to Shere Ali. I know her myself.'

The answer was given frankly and simply. For once Ralston

was outwitted. Dick Linforth had Violet Oliver to defend, and the defence was well done. Ralston was left without a suspicion that Linforth had any reason beyond the mere truth of the facts to spur him to defend her.

'Yes, that's the mistake,' said Ralston. 'The woman's friendly and means no more than she says or looks. But these fellows don't understand such friendship. Shere Ali is here dreaming of a woman he knows he can never marry—because of his race. And so he's ready to run amuck. That's what it comes to.'

He turned away from the city as he spoke and took a step or two towards the flight of stone stairs which led down from the tower.

'Where is Shere Ali now?' Linforth asked, and Ralston stopped and came back again.

'I don't know,' he said. 'But I shall know, and very soon. There may be a letter waiting for me at home. You see, when there's trouble brewing over there behind the hills, and I want to discover to what height it has grown and how high it's likely to grow, I select one of my police, a Pathan, of course, and I send him to find out.'

'You send him over the Malakand,' said Linforth, with a glance towards the great hill-barrier. He was to be astonished by the answer Ralston gave.

'No. On the contrary, I send him south. I send him to Ajmere, in Rajputana.'

'In Ajmere?' cried Linforth.

'Yes. There is a great Mohammedan shrine. Pilgrims go there from all parts, but mostly from beyond the frontier. I get my fingers on the pulse of the frontier in Ajmere more surely than I should if I sent spies up into the hills. I have a man there now. But that's not all. There's a great feast in Ajmere this week. And I think I shall find out from there where Shere Ali is and what he's doing. As soon as I do find out, I want you to go to him.'

'I understand,' said Linforth. 'But if he has changed so much, he will have changed to me.'

'Yes,' Ralston admitted. He turned again towards the steps, and the two men descended to their horses. 'That's likely enough. They ought to have sent you to me six months ago. Anyway, you must do your best.' He climbed into the saddle, and Linforth did the same.

'Very well,' said Dick, as they rode through the archway.

'I will do my best,' and he turned towards Ralston with a smile. 'I'll do my best to hinder the Road from going on.'

It was a queer piece of irony that the first real demand made upon him in his life was that he should stop the very thing on the accomplishment of which his hopes were set. But there was his friend to save. He comforted himself with that thought. There was his friend rushing blindly upon ruin. Linforth could not doubt it. How in the world could Shere Ali, he wondered. He could not yet dissociate the Shere Ali of to-day from the boy and the youth who had been his chum.

They passed out of the further gate of Peshawur and rode along the broad white road towards Government House. It was growing dark, and as they turned in at the gateway of the garden, lights shone in the windows ahead of them. The lights recalled to Ralston's mind a fact which he had forgotten to mention.

'By the way,' he said, turning towards Linforth, 'we have a lady staying with us who knows you.'

Linforth leaned forward in his saddle and stooped as if to adjust a stirrup, and it was thus a second or two before he answered.

'Indeed!' he said. 'Who is she?'

'A Mrs. Oliver,' replied Ralston. 'She was at Srinagar in Cashmere this summer, staying with the Resident. My sister met her there, I think she told Mrs. Oliver you were likely to come to us about this time.'

Dick's heart leaped within him suddenly. Had Violet Oliver arranged her visit so that it might coincide with his? It was at all events a pleasant fancy to play with. He looked up at the windows of the house. She was really there! After all these months he would see her. No wonder the windows were bright. As they rode up to the porch and the door was opened, he heard her voice. She was singing in the drawing-room, and the door of the drawing-room stood open. She sang in a low small voice, very pretty to the ear, and she was accompanying herself softly on the piano. Dick stood for a while listening in the lofty hall, while Ralston looked over his letters which were lying upon a small table. He opened one of them and uttered an exclamation.

'This is from my man at Ajmere,' he said, but Dick paid no attention. Ralston glanced through the letter.

'He has found him,' he cried. 'Shere Ali is in Ajmere.'

It took a moment or two for the words to penetrate to Linforth's mind. Then he said slowly:

'Oh! Shere Ali's in Ajmere. I must start for Ajmere to-morrow.'

Ralston looked up from his letters and glanced at Linforth. Something in the abstracted way in which Linforth had spoken attracted his attention. He smiled :

'Yes, it's a pity,' he said. But again it seemed that Linforth did not hear. And then the voice at the piano stopped abruptly as though the singer had just become aware that there were people talking in the hall. Linforth moved forward, and in the doorway of the drawing-room he came face to face with Violet Oliver. Ralston smiled again.

'There's something between those two,' he said to himself. But Linforth had kept his secrets better half an hour ago. For it did not occur to Ralston to suspect that there had been something also between Violet Oliver and Shere Ali.

(To be continued.)

‘FREDDY LEVESON.’

WHEN a man has died in his eighty-ninth year, it seems irreverent to recall him by his nickname. And yet the irreverence is rather in seeming than in reality, for a nickname, a pet-name, an affectionate abbreviation, is often the truest token of popular esteem. It was so with the subject of this paper, whose perennial youthfulness of heart and mind would have made any more formal appellation seem stiff and out of place.

Edward Frederick Leveson-Gower was the third son of Granville Leveson-Gower, first Earl Granville, by his marriage with Henrietta Elizabeth Cavendish, daughter of the third Duke of Devonshire. The very names breathe Whiggery, and in their combination they suggest a considerable and an important portion of our social and political history.

I have always maintained that Whiggery, rightly understood, is not a political creed, but a social caste. The Whig, like the poet, is born, not made. It is as difficult to become a Whig as to become a Jew. Macaulay was probably the only man who, being born outside the privileged enclosure, ever penetrated to its heart and assimilated its spirit. It is true that the Whigs, as a body, have held certain opinions and pursued certain tactics, which have been analysed in Chapters XIX. and XXI. of the unexpurgated ‘Book of Snobs.’ But those opinions and those tactics have been accidents of Whiggery. Its substance has been relationship. When Lord John Russell formed his first Administration, his opponents alleged that it was mainly composed of his cousins, and the lively oracles of Sir Bernard Burke confirmed the allegation. Mr. Beresford-Hope, in one of his novels, made excellent fun of what he called the ‘Sacred Circle of the Great-Grandmotherhood.’ He showed—what, indeed, the Whigs themselves knew uncommonly well—that from John, Earl Gower, who died in 1754, descend all the Gowers, Levesons, Howards, Cavendishes, Grosvenors, Harcourts, and Russells who walk on the face of the earth. Truly a noble and a highly favoured progeny. ‘They *are* our superiors,’ said Thackeray; ‘and that’s the fact. I am not a Whig myself (perhaps it is as unnecessary to say so as to say that I’m not King Pippin

in a golden coach, or King Hudson, or Miss Burdett-Coutts). I'm not a Whig ; but oh, how I should like to be one !'

It argues no political bias to maintain that, in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, Toryism offered its neophytes no educational opportunities equal to those which a young Whig enjoyed at Chatsworth and Bowood and Woburn and Holland House. Here the best traditions of the preceding century were constantly reinforced by accessions of fresh intellect. The circle was, indeed, an aristocratic Family-Party, but it paid a genuine homage to ability and culture. Genius held the key, and there was a *carrière ouverte aux talents*.

Into this privileged society Frederick Leveson-Gower was born on May 3, 1819 ; and within its precincts he 'kept the noiseless tenour of his way' for nearly ninety years. Recalling in 1905 the experiences of his boyhood, and among them a sharp illness at Eton, he was able to add, 'Never during my long life have I again been seriously ill.' To that extraordinary immunity from physical suffering was probably due the imperturbable serenity which all men recognised as his most characteristic trait, and which remained unruffled to the end.

It is recorded of the fastidious Lady Montfort in 'Endymion' that, visiting Paris in 1841, she could only with difficulty be induced to call on the British Ambassador and Ambassadress. 'I dined,' she said, 'with those people once ; but I confess that, when I thought of those dear Granvilles, their *entrées* stuck in my throat.' The 'dear Granvilles' in question were the parents of the second Lord Granville, whom we all remember as the most urbane of Foreign Secretaries, and of Frederick Leveson-Gower. The first Lord Granville was a younger son of the first Marquis of Stafford and brother of the second Marquis, who was made Duke of Sutherland. He was born in 1773, entered Parliament at twenty-two, and 'found himself a diplomatist as well as a politician before he was thirty years of age.' In 1804 he was appointed Ambassador to St. Petersburg, where he remained till 1807. In 1813 he was created Viscount Granville, and in 1824 became Ambassador to the Court of France. 'To the indignation of the Legitimist party in France, he made a special journey from Paris to London in order to vote for the Reform Bill of 1832, and, to their astonishment, returned alive to glory in having done so.' For this and similar acts of virtue he was raised to an earldom in 1833 ; he retired from diplomacy in 1841, and died in 1846.

Before he became an ambassador, this Lord Granville had rented a place called Wherstead, in Suffolk. It was there that Freddy Leveson passed the first years of his life, but from 1824 onwards the British Embassy at Paris was his home. Both those places had made permanent dints in his memory. At Wherstead he remembered the Duke of Wellington shooting Lord Granville in the face, and imperilling his eyesight : at Paris he was presented to Sir Walter Scott, who had come to dine with the Ambassador. When living at the Embassy, Freddy Leveson was a playmate of the Duc de Bordeaux, afterwards Comte de Chambord ; and at the age of eight he was sent from Paris to a Dr. Everard's school at Brighton, ' which was called the *House of Lords* owing to most of the boys being related to the peerage, many of them future peers, and among them several dukes.' Here, again, the youthful Whig found himself a playmate of princes. Prince George of Hanover and Prince George of Cambridge were staying with King William IV. at the Pavilion ; their companions were chosen from Dr. Everard's seminary ; and the King amused his nephews and their friends with sailors' stories, ' sometimes rather coarse ones.' In his holidays, Freddy enjoyed more refined society at Holland House. In 1828 his mother wrote with just elation : ' He always sits next to Lord Holland, and they talk without ceasing all dinner-time.'

From Brighton, Frederick Leveson was promoted in due course to Eton, where he played no games and made no friends, had poor health, and was generally unhappy. One trait of Eton life, and only one, he was accustomed in old age to recall with approbation, and that was the complete indifference to social distinctions.

' There is,' he wrote, ' a well-known story about my friend, the late Lord Bath, who, on his first arrival at Eton, was asked his name, and answered, " I am Viscount Weymouth, and I shall be Marquis of Bath." Upon which he received two kicks, one for the Viscount and the other for the Marquis. This story may not be true, but at any rate it illustrates the fact that if at Eton a boy boasted of his social advantages, he would have cause to repent it.

Leaving Eton at sixteen, Frederick Leveson went to a private tutor in Nottinghamshire, and there he first developed his interest in politics. ' Reform,' he wrote, ' is my principal aim.' Albany Fonblanque, whose vivacious articles, reprinted from ' The Examiner,' may still be read in ' England Under Seven Administrations,' was his political instructor, and indoctrinated him with certain views, especially in the domain of Political Economy, which

would certainly have been deemed heretical in the Whiggish atmosphere of Trentham or Chatsworth. In 1832, he made his appearance in society at Paris, and his mother wrote: 'As to Freddy, he turns all heads, and his own would be if it was to last more than a week longer. His dancing *fait fureur*.'

In October 1837 he went up to Christ Church, then rather languishing under Dean Gaisford's mismanagement. Here for three years he enjoyed himself thoroughly. He rode with the drag, was president of the Archery Club, played whist, gave and received a great deal of hospitality, and made some lifelong friendships. Among his contemporaries was Ruskin, of whom his recollection was certainly depressing. 'He seemed to keep himself aloof from everybody, to seek no friends, and to have none. I never met him in anyone else's rooms, or at any social gathering. I see him now, looking rather crazy, taking his solitary walks.'

That Freddy Leveson was 'thoroughly idle' was his own confession; and perhaps, when we consider all the circumstances, it is not surprising. What is surprising, and what he himself recorded with surprise, is that neither he nor his companions paid the least attention to the Oxford Movement, then just at its height, although—and this makes it stranger still—they used to attend Newman's sermons at St. Mary's. They duly admired his unequalled style, but the substance of his teaching seems to have passed by them like the idle wind.

After taking a 'nobleman's degree,' Frederick Leveson spent an instructive year in France, admitted, in virtue of his father's position, to the society of such men as Talleyrand and Thiers, Guizot and Molé, Berryer and Eugène Sue; and then he returned to England with the laudable, though uninspiring, intention of reading for the Bar. His profession was chosen for him by his father, and the choice was determined by a civil speech of George Canning, who, staying at the British Embassy at Paris, noticed little Freddy, and pleasantly said to Lord Granville, 'Bring that boy up as a lawyer, and he will one day become Lord Chancellor.' As a first step towards that elevation, Frederick Leveson entered the chambers of an eminent conveyancer called Plunkett, where he had for his fellow-pupils the men who became Lord Iddesleigh and Lord Farrer. Thence he went to a Special Pleader, and lastly to a leading member of the Oxford Circuit. As marshal to Lord Denman and to Baron Parke, he acquired some knowledge of the art of carving; but, with regard to the total result of his legal training,

he remarked, with characteristic simplicity, 'I cannot say that I learnt much law.' When living in lodgings in Charles Street, and eating his dinners at Lincoln's Inn, Frederick Leveson experienced to the full the advantage of having been born a Whig. His uncle, the sixth Duke of Devonshire, a benevolent magnifico if ever there was one, treated him like a son, giving him the run of Devonshire House and Chiswick; while Lady Holland, the most imperious of social dames, let him make a second home of Holland House.

I dined with her whenever I liked. I had only to send word in the morning that I would do so. Of course, I never uttered a word at dinner, but listened with delight to the brilliant talk—to Macaulay's eloquence and varied information, to Sydney Smith's exquisite jokes which made me die of laughing, to Rogers' sarcasms and Luttrell's repartees.

Frederick Leveson was called to the Bar in 1843, and went the Oxford Circuit, in the strangely assorted company of G. S. Venables, J. G. Phillimore, and E. V. Kenealy. This proved to be the last stage in his progress towards the Woolsack. Lord Granville died at the beginning of 1846, and the change which this event produced in Frederick Leveson's position can best be described in his own quaint words :

My father was greatly beloved by us all, and was the most indulgent parent—possibly too indulgent. Himself a younger son, although I cannot say that his own case was a hard one, he sympathised with me for being one of that unfortunate class. It may have been this feeling, combined with much affection, that made him leave me well provided for. I much question whether, if I had been left to earn my own bread by my own exertions as a lawyer, I should have succeeded.

His friends had no difficulty in answering the question, and answering it affirmatively; but the practical test was never applied; for, on succeeding to his inheritance, he glided—'plunged' would be an unsuitable word—into a way of living which was more like the *σχολή* of the Athenian citizen than the sordid strife of professional activity. He was singularly happy in private life, for the 'Sacred Circle of the Great-Grandmotherhood' contained some delightful women as well as some distinguished men. Such was his sister-in-law Marie, Lady Granville; such was Harriet, Duchess of Sutherland; such was his mother, the Dowager Lady Granville, and such, pre-eminently, was his sister, Lady Georgiana Fullerton, of whom a competent critic said that, in the female character of her novel 'Ellen Middleton,' she had drawn 'the line which is so apt to be overstepped, and which Walter Scott never clearly saw, between *naïveté* and vulgarity.' Myself a

devoted adherent of Sir Walter, I yet can recall some would-be pleasantries of Julia Mannering, of Isabella Wardour, and even of Di Vernon, which would have caused a shudder in the 'Sacred Circle.' Happiest of all was Freddy Leveson in his marriage with Lady Margaret Compton; but their married life lasted only five years, and left behind it a memory too tender to bear transplantation to the printed page.

Devonshire House was the centre of Freddy Leveson's social life, at least until the death of his uncle, the sixth Duke, in 1858. That unsightly but comfortable mansion was then in its days of glory, and those who frequented it had no reason to regret the past. 'Poodle Byng,' who carried down to 1871 the social traditions of the eighteenth century, declared that nothing could be duller than Devonshire House in his youth. 'It was a great honour to go there, but I was bored to death. The Duchess was usually stitching in one corner of the room, and Charles Fox snoring in another.' Under the splendid but arbitrary rule of the sixth Duke no one stitched or snored. Everyone who entered his saloons was well-born or beautiful or clever or famous, and many of the guests combined all four characteristics. When Prince Louis Napoleon first came to live in London, his uncle Jerome asked the Duke of Devonshire to invite his *mauvais sujet* of a nephew to Devonshire House, 'so that he might for once be seen in decent society'; and the Prince repaid the Duke by trying to borrow five thousand pounds to finance his descent on Boulogne. But the Duke, though magnificent, was businesslike, and the Prince was sent empty away.

The society in which Freddy Leveson moved during his long career was curiously varied. There was his own family in all its ramifications of cousinship; and beyond its radius there was a circle of acquaintances and associates, which contained Charles Greville the diarist and his more amiable brother Henry, Carlyle and Macaulay, Brougham and Lyndhurst, J. A. Roebuck and Samuel Wilberforce, George Grote and Henry Reeve, 'that good-for-nothing fellow, Count D'Orsay,' and Disraeli, 'always courteous, but his courtesy sometimes overdone.'

For womankind there was Lady Morley the wit, and Lady Cowper the humorist, and Lady Ashburton, who tamed Carlyle; Lady Jersey, the queen of fashion, and two sister-queens of beauty, Lady Canning and Lady Waterford; Lady Tankerville, who as a girl had taken refuge in England from the matrimonial advances of the Comte d'Artois; the three fascinating Foresters, Mrs. Robert

Smith, Mrs. Anson, and Lady Chesterfield; and Lady Molesworth and Lady Waldegrave, who had climbed by their cleverness from the lowest rung of the social ladder to a place not very far from the top.

Beyond this circle again, there was a miscellaneous zone, where dwelt politicians ranging from John Bright to Arthur Balfour; poets and men of letters, such as Tennyson and Browning; Thackeray and Motley and Laurence Oliphant; Paxton the gardener-architect, and Hudson the railway-king; stars of the musical world, such as Mario and Grisi and Rachel; blue-stockings like Lady Eastlake and Madame Mohl; Mademoiselle de Montijo, who captivated an Emperor, and Lola Montez, who ruled a kingdom. No advantages of social education will convert a fool or a bore or a prig or a churl into an agreeable member of society; but, where Nature has bestowed a bright intelligence and a genial disposition, her gifts are cultivated to perfection by such surroundings as Frederick Leveson enjoyed in early life. And so it came about that alike as a young man, in middle life (which was in his case unusually prolonged), and in old age, he enjoyed a universal and unbroken popularity.

It is impossible to connect the memory of Freddy Leveson with the idea of ambition; and it must therefore have been the praiseworthy desire to render unpaid service to the public which induced him to embark on the unquiet sea of politics. At a by-election in the summer of 1847 he was returned, through the interest of his uncle the Duke of Devonshire, for Derby; a General Election immediately ensued; he was returned again, but was unseated, with his colleague, for a technical irregularity. In 1852 he was returned for Stoke-upon-Trent, this time by the aid of his cousin the Duke of Sutherland (for the 'Sacred Circle' retained a good deal of what was termed 'legitimate influence'). In 1854, having been chosen to second the Address at the opening of Parliament, he was directed to call on Lord John Russell, then leader of the House, who would instruct him in his duties. Lord John was the shyest of human beings, and the interview was brief. 'I am glad you are going to second the Address. You will know what to say, Good morning.'

At the General Election of 1857 he lost his seat for Stoke. 'Poor Freddy,' writes his brother Lord Granville, 'is dreadfully disappointed by his failure in the Potteries. He was out-jockeyed by Ricardo.' All who knew 'poor Freddy' will easily realise that in a jockeying contest he stood no chance. In 1859 he was returned

for Bodmin, this time by the good offices not of relations but of friends—Lord Robartes and Lady Molesworth—and he retained the seat by his own merits till Bodmin ceased to be a borough. Twice during his Parliamentary career Mr. Gladstone offered him important office, and he declined it for a most characteristic reason—'I feared it would be thought a job.' The gaps in his Parliamentary life were occupied by travelling. As a young man he had been a great deal on the Continent, and had made what was then the adventurous tour of Spain. The winter of 1850-1 he spent in India; and in 1856 he accompanied his brother Lord Granville (to whom he had been 'précis-writer' at the Foreign Office) on his Special Mission to St. Petersburg for the Coronation of Alexander II. No chapter in his life was fuller of vivid and entertaining reminiscences, and his mind was stored with familiar memories of Radziwill, Nesselrode, and Todleben. 'Freddy,' wrote his brother, 'is supposed to have distinguished himself greatly by his presence of mind when the Grande Duchesse Hélène got deep into politics with him.'

A travelling experience which Freddy Leveson used to narrate with infinite gusto belongs to a later journey, and had its origin in the strong resemblance between him and his brother. Except that Lord Granville shaved, and that in later years Freddy Leveson grew a beard, there was little facially to distinguish them. In 1865 Lord Granville was Lord President of the Council, and therefore, according to the arrangement then prevailing, head of the Education Office. In that year Matthew Arnold, then an Inspector of Schools, was despatched on a mission to inquire into the schools and universities of the Continent. Finding his travelling allowances insufficient for his needs, he wrote home to the Privy Council Office requesting an increase. Soon after he had despatched this letter, and before he could receive the official reply, he was dining at a famous restaurant in Paris, and he chose the most highly priced dinner of the day. Looking up from his meal, he saw his official chief, Lord Granville, who chanced to be eating a cheaper dinner. Feeling that his gastronomical indulgence, when taken in connexion with his request for increased allowances, might, from the official point of view, require explanation, he stepped across to the Lord President, explained that it was only once in a way that he thus compensated himself for his habitual abstinence, and was delighted by the facile and kindly courtesy with which his official chief received the explanation. His delight was abated when he

subsequently found that he had been talking, not to Lord Granville, but to Mr. Leveson-Gower.

Looking back from the close of life upon its beginning, Freddy Leveson noted that as an infant he used to eat his egg 'very slowly, and with prolonged pleasure.' 'Did this'—he used to ask—'portend that I should grow up a philosopher or a *gourmand*? I certainly did not become the former, and I hope not the latter.' I am inclined to think that he was both; for whoso understands the needs of the body has mastered at least a great department of philosophy, and he who feeds his fellow-men supremely well is in the most creditable sense of the word a *gourmand*. Freddy Leveson's dinners were justly famous, and, though he modestly observed that 'hospitality is praised more than it deserves,' no one who enjoyed the labours of Monsieur Béguinot ever thought that they could be over-praised. The scene of these delights was a house in South Audley Street, which, though actually small, was so designed as to look like a large house in miniature; and in 1870 the genial host acquired a delicious home on the Surrey Hills, which commands a view right across Sussex to the South Downs. 'Holmbury' is its name, and 'There's no place like home-bury' became the grateful watchword of a numerous and admiring society.

People distinguished in every line of life, and conspicuous by every social charm, found at Holmbury a constant and delightful hospitality. None appreciated it more thoroughly than Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, whose friendship was one of the chief happinesses of Freddy Leveson's maturer life. His link with them was his cousin Harriet, Duchess of Sutherland, who, in spite of all Whiggish prejudices against the half-converted Tory, was one of Gladstone's most enthusiastic disciples. In 'Cliveden's proud alcove,' and in that sumptuous villa at Chiswick where Fox and Canning died, Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone were her constant guests; and there they formed their affectionate intimacy with Freddy Leveson. Every year, and more than once a year, they stayed with him at Holmbury; and one at least of those visits was memorable. On June 19, 1873, Mr. Gladstone wrote in his diary:

Off at 4.25 to Holmbury. We were enjoying that beautiful spot and expecting Granville with the Bishop of Winchester (Wilberforce), when the groom arrived with the message that the Bishop had had a bad fall. An hour and a half later Granville entered, pale and sad: 'It's all over.' In an instant the thread of that very precious life was snapped. We were all in deep and silent grief.

It is time to bring this paper to a close, but, for the sake of
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those who never knew Freddy Leveson, a word of personal description must be added. He was of middle height, with a slight stoop, which began, I fancy, from the fact that he was short-sighted and was obliged to peer rather closely at objects which he wished to see. His growing deafness, which in later years was a marked infirmity—he had no others—tended to intensify the stooping habit, as bringing him nearer to his companion's voice. His features were characteristically those of the house of Cavendish, as may be seen by comparing his portrait with that of his mother. His expression was placid, benign, but very far from inert; for his half-closed eyes twinkled with quiet mirth. His voice was soft and harmonious, with just a trace of a lisp, or rather of that peculiar intonation which is commonly described as 'short-tongued.' His bearing was the very perfection of courteous ease, equally remote from stiffness and from familiarity. His manners it would be impertinent to eulogise, and the only dislikes which I ever heard him express were directed against rudeness, violence, indifference to other people's feelings, and breaches of social decorum. If by such offences as these it was easy to displease him, it was no less easy to obtain his forgiveness, for he was as amiable as he was refined. In old age he wrote, with reference to the wish which some people express for sudden death, 'It is a feeling I cannot understand, as I myself shall feel anxious before I die to take an affectionate leave of those I love.' His desire was granted, and there my story ends. I have never known a kinder heart; I could not imagine a more perfect gentleman.

GEORGE W. E. RUSSELL.

'AMONGST THE MUTINY CITIES OF INDIA.

II.—CAWNPORE.

BY W. H. FITCHETT.

To anybody with a touch of imagination, the most memorable and pathetic spot in all India is one which is strangely un-Indian in aspect. Imagine a little Gothic church of red brick, hard, angular, shadeless, set on a patch of empty brown plain. No house is near it. No road, with its stream of picturesque Indian figures, runs by it. No domed mosque or figure-crowded gaupura breaks the sky-line anywhere. The flat plain, the empty landscape, the unlovely Gothic church, set like a red ember on a brown tablecloth, do not suggest India. And the scene, silent and empty of life, set in the heart of crowded India, wears an aspect so desolate that it seems as if some curse lay upon it, and mankind had abandoned it with a shudder. And the shadow of a tragedy *does* lie upon it, and will lie on it for ever. For this is Cawnpore! Wheeler's entrenchments are scribbled upon that patch of sun-scorched plain. That road running north leads to the Murder Ghaut. Yonder across the trees is the 'house of massacre.' Less than five hundred yards off is the strangest well on the planet—in which, within three weeks, 250 English people were cast by English hands, a grave which will keep its dreadful charge till the sea gives up its dead. There has been more of human valour and suffering, and more, too, of human cruelty, within a few square roods of where the visitor stands than perhaps on any other patch of the earth's surface of the same area.

It is a December Sunday as the present writer stands there; and if one could forget history, it might be said that the strange quiet of the scene fits the day. Peace seems to lie on the silent landscape. Earth and sky are hushed. Presently the deep note of the church-bell breaks on the air, in rhythmic waves of sound. The calling bell, the Sabbath peace, the church with its open doors, the grave on whose railing the meditating visitor leans—all combine to produce a strange effect. In the cells of memory a hundred gentle associations stir. Take the brown out of the landscape, the

edge of white flame out of the sunshine ; draw a leafy fretwork of rambling hedges over the plain, sprinkle a few white cottages upon it ; prick the sky-line with half a dozen church spires, and this might be a Sunday morning in rural England.

But the visitor begins to read the inscription on the gravestone :—

‘ In three graves within this enclosure lie the remains of Major Edward Vibart, 2nd Bengal Light Cavalry, and about seventy officers and soldiers, who, after escaping from the massacre at Cawnpore on June 27, 1857, were captured by the rebels at Sheorajpore, and murdered on July 1. These remains were originally deposited within the compound of Savada House, and were removed to this place in April 1861.’

Round the grave runs the inscription : ‘ In the world ye shall have tribulation. But be of good cheer ; I have overcome the world.’ Where under peaceful English skies does the call of the churchgoing bell float over graves like these ? This is the sleeping-place of the twice buried—one might almost say of the twice slain !

While the visitor is reading this strange inscription, and meditating on these unhappy seventy, who were plucked from massacre once, only to be overtaken by it again three days later, there is the sound of many feet on the hard, sun-scorched soil. The congregation is gathering. The sound of the coming feet is disciplined and rhythmical. It is a detachment of the Somersets, not in drab-coloured khaki, but in the historic red, for the winter clothing has been served out to the troops. The men march, as the wondering visitor sees, with rifles on shoulder and ammunition pouches in their belts. This surely is strange equipment for a church service. But this is the India of the Mutiny ; and it is the one province in the British Empire where the King’s soldiers defile through the church door equipped as if for the firing-line. Peaceful England is, indeed, far away.

The historic entrenchments begin within a few steps of the church, the outlines being marked by a slender line of hedges. Little brick pillars mark the places where the guns were planted, the site of the barracks, &c. At one angle is an inscription : ‘ The garrison of this entrenchment consisted of about 950 souls, thus . . . ’ Then follows the list ; and it brings out the dreadful fact that amongst the 950 were no fewer than 320 children ! Every third figure in this company of the doomed was a little child. The entrenchments were drawn round two rambling barracks. One

of them had been the hospital barracks of a dragoon regiment, but when the Mutiny broke out was occupied by the *dépôt* of the 32nd. They were low buildings, each intended to accommodate a hundred men. The walls were of brick ; one of them had a thatched roof ; round each ran a sloping verandah, with masonry supports.

To the north, the entrenchment curved out into a sort of horn, forming what was called 'The Redan' ; and immediately beyond, within pistol-shot distance, was a line of unfinished barracks. They commanded the whole length of the entrenchments, and from them the Sepoys kept up a continuous fire on the unhappy garrison. One half of these unfinished barracks, however, was held by the British as a sort of outpost, a dozen engineers employed on the East Indian railways forming the tiny garrison ; and some of the fiercest fighting of the siege took place betwixt one end of this line of Barracks and the other. At first the British used to clear out the line, with bayonet and musket, from end to end, at least once every day, and then fall back to their particular section of the line ; then the Sepoys crept again to their share of the post. Later, the British grew too weak to keep up the clearing-out process.

The visitor is filled with an emotion of pitiful wonder as he looks round, and realises the scanty area covered by the entrenchments, and the slender, not to say childish, defences by which they were girdled. Here is a little parallelogram, as level as a billiard-table, about 300 yards long and less than 200 yards wide. The 'entrenchments' were a mere irregular scratch in the hard soil, drawn round the two barracks. It was difficult, no doubt, to excavate the sun-hardened earth ; but the work was taken in hand too late ; it was done too carelessly. The loose earth was thrown up about four feet high, and nothing was done to make it solid. An active cow could have jumped over the defences at any point. It was defended by only ten guns, all of them light in calibre, and most of them mere field artillery. And upon this little patch of unsheltered soil, defended by that miserable ribbon of loose earth, 1,000 people, more than one half of them women and children, were crowded. There was no shelter from the intolerable June sun. They were faint with hunger, half-wild with thirst, scorched with intolerable heat, tormented with perpetual musketry fire from every front. Shells exploded over every square yard of the entrenchments. Heavy shot pounded the barracks to dust. And for twenty-four days this unhappy multitude endured this torment, till every second person was dead !

A bit of the actual earthwork still stands, a ridge of hardened clay about 2 feet 6 inches high and 50 yards in length. And the visitor, as he looks at it pitifully, thinks of the crouching figures, rifle in hand, that held it for so long; of the women and children that slept behind that frail shelter, of the cruel fire from without that broke incessantly upon it. He speculates afresh, with angry wonder, why a spot so hopeless was chosen for the last stand of the British, and a girdle of defences so contemptible drawn round the unhappy garrison. Cawnpore had been, since the days of Clive, a military stronghold for the British. It was at one time the headquarters of the field-command of Bengal, a command which probably amounted to 40,000 troops. The great magazine stood in the city, a walled enclosure covering three acres, and holding a vast store of guns and ammunition. This was the natural place of arms for Wheeler's scanty force. If it had been held, there would have been no Cawnpore massacre.

But General Wheeler neither held the magazine nor blew it up. He chose this patch of shadeless plain, gathered within a frail ridge of earthworks all the Europeans of the city, and left in the great magazine, for Sepoy use, all the means for his own destruction, in the shape of mortars, heavy guns, and illimitable stores of ammunition!

A 'personal narrative' of the whole story, written by a Eurasian official named Shepherd, who fought within the entrenchments, is sold locally. It is obviously a genuine story, with an unmistakable atmosphere of reality and truth about it, and it gives a vivid picture of the events of those wild days. The writer describes the reluctance felt by the Europeans of the city to entrust themselves to the shelter of the absurd entrenchments. A deputation of merchants waited on Wheeler, and begged him to hold the magazine, and make it the place of refuge for the garrison. But Wheeler refused, and would give no reasons for his refusal. 'The merchants,' says Shepherd, 'talked very bitterly on the subject'; they were persuaded, it seems, that the spot selected for the entrenchment was chosen because its guns would protect the hungalows of the officers on each side of the canal!

It is certain that, while the merchants and the Eurasians in Cawnpore realised in some measure the scale and certainty of the coming outbreak, the military officials on the spot lived in a fools' paradise. On the morning of the very day, indeed, upon which all the British in Cawnpore had to take hurried refuge in

the entrenchments, Wheeler despatched two officers and fifty men of the 84th to the assistance of Henry Lawrence at Lucknow! There was some plan for blowing up the magazine if an outbreak took place; but the officer to whom this task was assigned found himself closely watched by the Sepoy guard in the magazine, and two days previous to the outbreak he was shut out of it by his own soldiers. It is clear that had there been at Cawnpore Henry Lawrence, with his forecasting brain, or Willoughby with his port-fire, the magazine would either have been held by the British, or would have been blown up, so as to yield no assistance to the Sepoys.

Shepherd's 'personal narrative' gives many curious details quite unknown to grave history. He pictures, for example, the first attack on the entrenchments on June 6, when the whole of the mutineers, headed by Nana Sahib, brought out their guns and opened fire on the British. The first gun was fired at half-past ten, and it was the confident expectation of the Sepoys that a couple of hours' steady firing would be sufficient to destroy the British. Nana Sahib, it seems, 'made a vow not to alight from his horse until the entrenchments had been captured,' but night fell, and still the great guns thundered on the scanty British defences without bringing any sign of surrender. By this time the Nana was tired of sitting on his steed, so a carpet was spread in a deep ditch in one of the batteries, and there he passed the night. All night the Sepoy fire was kept up, but in the morning Nana Sahib, in spite of his vow, had to waddle away to his quarters.

The stubborn British held their own, not for two hours, but for more than three weeks. In the slender British garrison were nearly a hundred officers of Sepoy regiments who had mutinied; young fellows, the pick of their race, who had faced tigers in the jungle, and speared wild boars on the plains. They were quick of eye, and deadly of aim, the best fighting stuff the human race knows. A garrison of which nearly every third man was an English officer—no wonder it held out beyond all Sepoy calculation!

Shepherd's pictures of the chief figures in the defence are interesting. Moore of the 32nd was perhaps the best fighting man behind the earthworks, and Shepherd tells admiring stories of his exhaustless daring—a fighting energy through which ran a certain note of gaiety. His very presence was an inspiration. Moore, it seems, could sulk on occasion, but there was heroic reason for his sulking. On one occasion he gave up his command, and,

like another Achilles, betook himself to his equivalent for a tent—the corner of a ruined room. He had pressed Wheeler, long and fiercely, to be allowed to take all the fighting men in the entrenchments and fall on the Sepoys in the open ; and the final rejection of his daring proposal made him for a few brief hours resign his post.

Shepherd, too, gives an account of an interview he had with General Wheeler, which is pathetic. In this interview he referred to the death of Wheeler's son, a young officer, who had been wounded, and, while his sister and mother were bending over him, a round shot broke into the room and shattered the unhappy lad's head. Shepherd describes the General as 'sitting on a mattress on the floor looking very feeble and aged.' When he mentioned his son's name 'the old man covered his face with both hands and burst into a paroxysm of grief ; his whole body shook as if his heart were bursting. He rose to his feet, went into a corner of the room, and there gave vent to his overpowering emotion in a flood of tears.' This was touching ; but this old, frail man, with the tears running through his fingers as he covered his face, was no fit leader in a position so desperate.

Shepherd's stories of the sad scenes he witnessed during the siege are very graphic. The heat, he says, 'was so extreme that it was often impossible to touch the barrel of a gun, and sometimes muskets went off at mid-day from the sun exploding their caps.' The suffering from thirst was intense. No drop of water was available for washing purposes ; and what with the heat and smoke and dust, the whole garrison, in look and dress, 'resembled nothing so much as a band of seafarers who had taken to a raft to escape a burning ship.' Many of these unhappy sufferers, it must be remembered, were refined English ladies who had never known a day's hardship.

At first the women and children were sheltered in the barracks, but the enemy's guns destroyed these, and they had to crouch in the trenches, or in holes dug by their husbands and covered with boxes and cots ; 'many,' Shepherd says, 'dying daily from heat.' They could get shelter from the cruel hail of lead nowhere. 'We passed,' writes Shepherd, 'whole days standing clinging to the walls of the half-destroyed barracks, or crouching in corners to avoid the shots.' Anything served as a screen. A woman and a child might be seen crouching behind an empty barrel, as though that could screen them from bullets ! During the day, those who

were killed lay where they fell ; or if a shot found and slew them under the scanty shelter of the ruins, the bodies were simply put outside to give more room for the living. 'The distress was so great that none could offer a word of consolation to his friend.' At night a fatigue party gathered up the slain of the day and carried them to that sad well outside the entrenchments which served as a grave. This well has been arched over ; above it stands a memorial cross, and on the face of it is the inscription :

'In a well, under this cross, were laid, by the hands of their fellows in suffering, the bodies of men, women, and children who died hard by during the heroic defence of Wheeler's Intrenchment when beleaguered by the Rebel Nana—June 6 to 27. A.D. mdccclvii.'

On the pedestal of the cross is incised a verse from the 141st Psalm—'Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth. But our eyes are unto Thee, O God, the Lord.'

Only once during the siege did any reinforcement reach the unhappy garrison. This was in the shape of an officer named Bolton, of the 7th Cavalry. The garrison one morning saw the figure of a horseman suddenly break through the Sepoys' lines and come riding furiously toward the entrenchment. A score of muskets flashed upon the rider, in the belief that it was a rebel sowar ; but the horseman kept on his course, rode straight for the line of earthworks, and cleared it at a bound. His regiment had mutinied, his brother-officers had been cut down ; but Bolton escaped, had outridden his pursuers, and made for Cawnpore. He somehow found his way through the Sepoy lines and rode straight for the entrenchments in the fashion described. But he escaped death in one form only to meet it in another. He played a gallant part during the siege, but perished in the boats at Massacre Ghaut.

The visitor lingers with pitiful interest beside the famous well in the entrenchment itself. It was the only source from which the tormented garrison drew their supply of water. The Sepoys knew this, and kept upon this spot an incessant fire. The cover to the well was quickly destroyed. The well is about seventy feet deep, and the task of drawing up a bucket of water was slow and tedious, and too often the scanty supply of water gained had to be paid for in blood. The well remains almost exactly as when the siege ended, except that the wheel has been restored ; and on this Sunday a Hindoo was using the water he had raised to refresh a little patch

of vegetation. The visitor stoops down and drinks from the water, and thinks of the parched lips that drank from that same well fifty years ago.

The Memorial Church is surely the saddest place of worship in Christendom. How many dreadful memories are crystallised into the inscriptions with which its walls are scribbled over! One record recites, 'To the glory of God, and in memory of more than a thousand people who met their deaths, hard by, betwixt 6th June and 15th July, 1857, these tablets are placed in this, the Memorial Church.' The walls of the apse are covered with names. Certainly in no other Christian church on earth has the altar such a roll-call of names, each name—man, woman, and child—representing an uttermost anguish endured. Many of the inscriptions are of peculiar interest. One runs, 'To the memory of the engineers of the East India Railway who died and were killed in the great insurrection of 1857. Erected in affectionate remembrance by their brother engineers in the north-western provinces.' A person with sensitive imagination, as he sits in this church, sees, not the living audience, but a congregation of ghosts.

But, after all, the saddest memories of Cawnpore are not those which brood over the entrenchments. The whole story is a thread on which is strung—like so many black beads on a bloody cord—a succession of tragedies. After the twenty-four days' torment of the entrenchments comes the march of the survivors to the Murder Ghaut, the treachery at the boats, the flight down the river, the sad pilgrimage of the surviving women and children back from the Murder Ghaut to the Massacre House. And then—the crown of the whole black story—comes the crime of which the Well, with Marochetti's angel above it—is the witness. The road to the Ganges is a shady track, less than a mile in length. After crossing a wooden bridge, it swings to the right, and runs down the ravine—or ghaut—to the river. It is a true *Via Dolorosa*. As the visitor walks along it he pictures that sad procession of fifty years ago; the little company of 450 people—gaunt, ragged, unwashed, weary with toil and faint with hunger and wounds—who had left their dead behind them; and, though they knew it not, had death before them.

Just where the ghaut dips to the river still stands the temple—fitly enough, dedicated to Siva, the goddess of cruelty—almost exactly as it stood on the morning of the crime. Down these broken stone steps that mournful company of the doomed stumbled

towards the boats. The scene is just what it must have been on that far-off morning; the grey sands, the shrunken river, a few boats with roofs of leaves. A curious loneliness lies on the whole scene. There are no pilgrims at the water's edge; no children playing in the pillared shade of the side steps. One is tempted to think that even the natives shun this spot as accursed. On that narrow strip, half-mud, half-sand, betwixt the last broken step in the staircase and the stream of the Ganges, how many brave men and tender women perished by treachery! And in the whole story of Cawnpore perhaps there is nothing more tragical than the return of the survivors along the road by which, an hour earlier, they had gone down—dreaming of home and safety—to the Murder Ghaut!

They were 125 in number, all, with three or four exceptions, women and children. They had tasted the bitterness of death fifty times over in the entrenchments; they had drunk full of it on the temple steps by the Ganges. Hope had gone with them on their march down the ghaut; but now they were returning, a band of despairing captives. And before them, as they might well have guessed, was the Massacre House, and the dreadful Well. They had eighteen days of life yet to endure; but better if they had perished with their husbands and brothers under the rain of musketry fire, or had been drowned in the grey waters of the Ganges. It is easy to picture the sad company; the stumbling feet, the bedraggled garments, the white, drawn faces, as they came back, leaving their unburied dead behind them. For them that dusty, climbing track was worse than the Way of Death.

The Massacre House has disappeared completely, as though an attempt had been made to cleanse the soil of its very shadow. The grass grows green over its site, as if kindly Nature, with its gracious ministry, was trying to blot out the stain of blood. But the tree still stands, with whispering leaves, round which the children of that mournful company may sometimes have played. A small plain cross on a black base of iron, marks where the house stood. Its inscription runs: 'In Memoriam. On this spot stood the House of Massacre, July 15th, 1857.' Below, with an incongruity which shocks natural feeling, is a Hindoo name, 'Teel Ram, Sculptor.' Behind is a weeping willow, planted by the present King in 1875. Was there ever a house erected by human hands, so charged with dreadful memories as that which stood on this spot!

A few steps distant is the well. It has been arch'd over; above it stands the angel of the Resurrection. The turf is green all around it. An octagonal Gothic screen shuts round the little enclosure. Artistically, the screen is more effective as one stands within it, than as seen from without. But for the visitor, Marochetti's angel, Street's Gothic screen, disappear. The rich green turf turns to arid dust. The half-century vanishes. The well is once more an open grave! And what stabs the heart with pity still, is the memory—not of the dead within the grave—but of the little children, who had been overlooked by the murderers in the black night just gone, and who ran out from amongst the dead, in the morning, when the bodies were being carried to the well. They followed their dead mothers to their strange grave, and were chased, with cruel glee, round and round the well itself, till they were caught and flung into it. It is clear that 'the ape and tiger' still slumber—and even fitfully awaken—in human nature!

A little distance from the well, the soldier in charge points to a tree on whose branches, according to tradition, Neill hanged two hundred and fifty Sepoys, convicted of partnership in the massacre; and as the visitor looks at the well and at the tree, he is tempted to think that one was the just complement of the other! One body, alas! did *not* dangle from that fatal tree: that of Nana Sahib himself. There would have been a grim fitness in hanging that master criminal in sight of the Massacre House, and of the Well where sleep his victims.

A strange mystery shrouds the fate of the Nana. He died a hunted outcast; but where, or when, or how is untold, but not unguessed. Amongst the letters sent me after the publication of 'The Tale of the Great Mutiny' in these columns, was one from a gallant soldier, Major-General Harris, who took an active part in the great struggle. It gives some interesting and hitherto unpublished details as to the ultimate fate of Nana Sahib. General Harris writes:

'History never yet has been written, and never will be, without mistakes, and I am not concerned to rectify trifles. One thing only I would mention, as I am sure it would be interesting to you, and it is known only to my family and to a few friends, mostly dead, if not all. You say: "No one knows where or how the Nana died." I will tell you; but the exact dates I cannot now remember, and to do so I must give you a short sketch of myself. I was a subaltern in the 2nd E. B. Fusiliers, and returned to India, from sick-leave in England, in the cold weather of '56-'57, stayed for some weeks at Cawnpore, on the way up to join my regiment at Umballa. I knew the Nana quite well, having been intro-

duced to him at Cawnpore as far back as '51. When the Mutiny broke out, I was with my regiment at Subathoo, and marched down to Delhi with them. The first fight was at Badli-ki-Serai, on June 8, and I was on the Ridge, &c. &c., and was badly wounded, and left for Subathoo again, apparently a hopeless cripple, but got all right again, and in 1858 was appointed adjutant of 15th Musbee Sikhs, and marched with them to Lucknow, arriving early in October. In November I was ordered, with a detachment of three companies, first to Byram Ghat and then to a ford on the Upper Gogra, called Chilari Ghat. A small party of seventeen Royal Engineers, under Richard Harrison, presently joined me, with orders to construct a bridge, and a regiment of Pioneers, unarmed, with a lieutenant in command, to help. I commanded the whole.

'Now these Musbees had never been enlisted by Government before; low-caste men, all—or almost all—expert thieves, and treacherous. I had a guard of them always at the ford, and lived myself in a tent close by. Now this ford was only about thirty miles from the Terai, into which the rebel forces, with the Nana, had been driven, and, for all the deserters from his force, it was the most convenient to get back to Western Oude, or Rohilcund. Moreover, it was the only one where they would not meet some European force. Very shortly I found that, through my native officers, I was thoroughly posted up in all the Nana's movements. There was, as you know, a lac of rupees reward for him, dead or alive. Two of my subahdars were always at me to allow them three or four days' leave to capture him. They kept me informed of his movements like a court circular. I always told them that I was on duty for a certain purpose, and it was impossible I could give any man leave. One Thursday, Ram Sing came to me, begging me still more strongly than before, saying the Nana was getting much worse—he was, as I knew, suffering from fever and ague, and had an enlarged spleen—and he told me that the Nana had had his little finger cut off, and had burnt it as an offering to Kali, with a view of propitiating the goddess. Two days after this Ram Sing and the other subahdar came and said: "No one will get the reward now; he died and was burnt yesterday." And I feel quite sure it was true, for I had known for some weeks all about his movements.

'Should you like to make use of this story, I have no objection; indeed, shall be glad to be of some use.'

ALLIES.

THE two boys and the man sitting at the table of the tiny ward-room were not talking much. The lieutenant looked preoccupied and very tired; the sub, who was sitting by him, looked at him anxiously from time to time out of the corner of his eye; while the gunner opposite, a handsome bronzed giant of a man, tried to persuade his commanding officer to eat some of the rather unappetising-looking food, which had obviously been dumped down anyhow on the dirty plates and the dirty table.

When you have had little or no sleep for a week, eating becomes a nuisance.

There was a scuffling noise at the door, and the lower half of a very dishevelled barefooted sailor appeared; his whole body gradually followed, entirely blocking the little pantry at the foot of the companion. He had his cap in one hand, and a piece of paper in the other.

'Signal from the flagship, sir. Officers commanding torpedo-boats to report on board the flagship at 2.30 P.M.'

A grunt from the lieutenant was the only answer; but as the man put his cap on and turned to climb up the short ladder to the deck, he was recalled by a peremptory 'Come here.' He turned himself about sheepishly.

'Why the blazes don't you wash the plates and keep things cleaner? I've known some dirty signalmen, but you're the worst of the bunch. If things aren't better pretty soon you shall go back to the flagship for a proper scrubbing down.'

The signalman saluted and beat a retreat.

'Talks as though I wanted to stay in his blarsted packet,' he murmured softly as he made his way forrard. 'Ow the 'ell can I keep an eye on the flagship and wash up the wardroom plates at the same time? It's not one man's job, it ain't.'

The trio in the wardroom preserved a gloomy silence. It is not well to talk if you are torpedo-boating, when your commanding officer has a splitting headache. Various noises, some near, some distant, smote the ear. In the engine-room, separated by a wafer of steel from the wardroom, the E.R.A. in charge was making

at intervals a prodigious clattering and hammering on account of certain choked condenser tubes; the boat rolled gently now and again to the wash of a picket-boat or other craft bustling by, and the gentle movement awoke little voices; the patent safety lamps—awkward contrivances that possess sharp angles for the head of the unwary—swung gently creaking; the door knocked on its hook; something loose in one of the lockers rolled slowly to and fro. It was very hot, and the atmosphere was sour with the reek of stale viands, coal-dust, blacking, grease, cheese, and oilskins.

The lieutenant threw himself back into his corner of the sofa, where his blankets were piled up into an untidy heap with a sea-boot on the top, and fell into a kind of doze. The sub and the gunner finished the bottle of beer and lit their pipes.

Presently the gunner looked at his watch, and said to the lieutenant, 'When will you have the dinghy, sir?'

No answer: he tried again, with no better result, then leant over and shook the boy by the arm.

The lieutenant jumped up with a start. 'Eh, what's that?' he said.

'Time to go to the flagship, sir.'

'Yes, where's my other coat and my boots?' He tried to stand up, but reeled, dizzy with pain.

They dressed him somehow and got him into the dinghy, with a whispered injunction to the two sailors to pull easy as the lieutenant was not very well.

'That's a good officer, sir,' the gunner said, as he and the sub watched the receding boat.

'Yes, we're lucky to have him. I'm afraid he ought to be on the list though.'

'Oh, he'll be all right with a good night's rest; they can't send us out again to-night.'

'Not so sure of that,' said the sub. 'What do they want with this pow-wow in the flagship now?'

The gunner shrugged his shoulders.

They were lying in a long narrow loch, opposite a little village which nestled under the wooded hillside down by the water's edge. Fifteen torpedo-boats, of various sizes and ages, but all of them with a built-up foc's'le and a turn of speed—no absolute rubbish—half a dozen destroyers, and a torpedo-gunboat, the 'flagship' of the flotilla. In the haze of the sun nearer the mouth

of the loch the amorphous outline of an elderly battleship was visible, 'mother-ship' to the flotilla, from whose body they drew sustenance—water, coal, stores of all kinds.

As they watched, two of the destroyers on the far side of the loch gently awoke from sleep and slid along through the still water towards the battleship.

'Who are outside to-day?' said the sub.

'Earwig and Centipede, I think, sir. That's Plunger and Quickly going out as reliefs.'

'Poor Plungers! And their sub was so pleased too when he heard that they were only good for twelve knots till the manœuvres were over. He didn't think of this sentry-go business outside.'

They sat on the torpedo-tubes aft, while the gunner yarned of his Chinese experiences—he had helped relieve the Peking Legations.

'Rummy little devils, the Japanese, sir. A funny thing happened one night when we were fighting our way up. The camp was mostly asleep when there was a tootling of bugles from where the Japs lay, and you would have said it was a fresh column coming into camp. Some of our chaps said they saw a whole battalion and some machine guns come in, though it was too dark a night to see much. Anyhow, next morning there seemed no more of them than before, but by an' by, when the Chinese made their last good stand and there were plenty of bullets flying about, I was sent with a message to their Maxim, and blest if there wasn't about three more regiments of them than anyone had ever seen before, or saw again. I didn't know what to think, and don't know now.' He pondered for a while. 'The Japs and the Chinese too make a lot of magic we know nothing about.'

'Oh, I say,' laughed the sub, 'I don't think there need have been much magic about that.'

'Well, sir, perhaps not; but the Japanese are an uncanny lot, and that's a fact. There were other things as well—,' he fell into a muse. Presently, 'Here's the lootenant coming home,' he said.

The little boat, pulled by two barefooted, dirty-white sailors, came alongside and the lieutenant stepped on deck. His face wore an indignant expression.

'Blue fleet's turned south and will be off the Irish coast somewhere about one o'clock to-night. The whole lot of us are to go

and look for them ; what a Juggins the commodore was not to have given us a rest yesterday ! Here we are, all about as dead as we can be with chasing tramps and our own cruisers, and now the chance does come and we—here, below there, engine-room ! ’

‘ Aye, aye, sir,’ said a voice from the depths, and in a few moments there emerged from the round hole of the engine-room hatchway a grimy figure. The engine-room artificer this, a good man.

‘ Steam in both boilers by eight o’clock ; and have you finished packing that gland yet ? ’

‘ Yes, sir ; but we shall have a trouble to keep up the pressure to-night, the stokers are not very fresh.’

‘ Yes, I know ; your leading stoker must drive them a bit. I shall want all the steam you can give her very likely.’

The afternoon passed slowly away ; one or two of the more energetic subs sculled themselves in their dinghies to visit other subs, but for the most part the flotilla slept. The boats had had a pretty hard time of it during the last week. Their commodore was a man of iron, who seemed never to want sleep himself and to expect others to do without it. Out each night at sunset, to patrol the thirty-mile-wide channel till long past dawn, with the possibility of being snapped up by some prowling cruiser of the enemy, then back alongside the ‘ mother-ship ’ for coal and water, and no chance of ‘ letting go ’ till well into the forenoon : this had been the routine for days, and all hands had begun to feel the strain. In the stokehold and engine-room they had had a particularly hard time.

There had been a succession of summer gales, and a good many of the boats had stokers who were more or less incapacitated from burns, which are plentiful during rough weather in torpedo-boat stokeholds. Red-hot metal is an unpleasant thing to be pitched against violently, but not even the most experienced man can always keep his feet in the tiny, glowing, reeling inferno between the furnace doors. You have to use both your arms to wield your shovel. The only *point d’appui* remaining is your head, which you wrap in wet cloths and press against the boilers, while you struggle, sometimes vainly, to keep your balance.

These things cannot be helped, and the ‘ hard-lying money,’ freedom from big-ship routine, and certain small though appreciable privileges, make the torpedo service a popular one with the lower deck. Only men of good character are selected for it, and the hardships are cheerfully accepted as part of the game. As for the

officers, they naturally like to be 'on their own'; great is the joy of independent command.

At about seven o'clock the signalman brought down another message which had been semaphored from the flagship.

'Numbers 140, 142, 143 torpedo boats. Reported that one of Red battleships with engine-room defects separated from rest of fleet and is now lying in Pastick Roads. The three boats indicated to proceed at dusk under the command of senior officer to investigate and attack if the report is true. Rendezvous two miles north-east of Cape Phayre at daybreak, and return to loch. Any boats seen will be Red fleet as remainder of flotilla will be south of Cape Phayre.'

The lieutenant nodded. 'Senior officer, that's me,' he said. 'At dusk, say eight-thirty.' Then, to the gunner, 'Mr. Harrison, send a hand in the dinghy to collect Mr. Barber and Mr. Cleland from 142 and 143. I must see them before we start.'

The gunner went on deck, and the signalman proceeded to lay out supper. In about ten minutes there was a sound of oars approaching, and two lieutenants in sea-boots and coats which had once rejoiced in the glory of two stripes of gold lace round the sleeve, but which now looked as if they had been stolen from a scarecrow, let themselves down into the wardroom, followed by the gunner.

Greetings were exchanged, with a little chaff, then charts were got out and a plan of campaign agreed upon. While the three lieutenants were discussing the problem, with the sub and the gunner making as much room for them in the tiny place as possible, a bowl of hot and steaming soup made its appearance.

'By Jove, you do the thing in luxury in this packet,' said Cleland.

'Will you have some?' said the lieutenant.

'No, thanks; you swallow all you can, old man. How's the head?'

'Rotten.'

'Dicky knows how to work us, don't he? Come on, Barbs; time we went. So long; mudhook inboard 8.20, ain't it? Dig out like sin till we're away from the land, then ten knots till we're near by. Hope it's the old Quid we're after.'

The two gained the deck.

'Poor old skipper, he looks a bit pinched.'

'Yes, those heads of his are no joke; he was always having

them in the *Britannia*, I remember ; but he manages to stick them out as a rule.'

The lieutenant made a gallant effort to swallow something, but very soon gave it up and lay back on the settee with a groan. The meal was quickly over, and all three pulled on their sea-boots and completed their arrangements for a night of watching.

'If Red's got any gumption he'll have sent all the destroyers he can spare to wait off the mouth of the loch for us to-morrow morning as we come back,' said the gunner.

'Or even to-night, as soon as it gets dark,' added the sub.

'Yes, that's why we're going as hard as we can for a bit,' said the lieutenant. 'We don't want to attack till two o'clock, so we have lots of time. There's no moon, but it will be a pretty bright night, I'm afraid.'

On deck it was still very hot ; the fiery after-glow in the west was streaked by some heavy bands of clouds, giving promise of rain ; and the heat-laden wind whispered of oncoming thunder.

In the three boats told off for the separate adventure the sailors were already busy forrard on the turtle-deck about the cable ; the lieutenant and the sub went up on to the 'bridge,' the latter actively superintending the home-coming of the anchor. A few minutes later the trio were slipping quickly along the water through the gathering darkness, 140 leading the little column.

All three were of the same class. They were some fifteen years old, but had recently had their old Scotch boilers exchanged for water-tubes and could do twenty-two knots at a pinch. Each carried two torpedo-tubes amidships, firing fourteen-inch torpedoes—which are not so powerful as the eighteen-inch torpedo, but yet can blow a hole through the side of the staunchest ironclad afloat—and three small quick-firing guns. They had originally been built to fire a third torpedo from a bow tube, but this had been removed, and only the flat cap remained, to make a most unnecessary amount of spray fly over the turtle deck as the bows dipped into the water.

'Now, Mac,' said the lieutenant to the sub, 'you go below and get some sleep. I shall want you to come and relieve the deck in about three hours. Send Mr. Harrison up to me on your way down.'

'Aye, aye, sir.'

In a minute or two the gunner climbed up on to the 'bridge,' which is no bridge, but a most unstable turtle deck on which is mounted a three-pounder Hotchkiss gun, and saluted.

'Mr. Macdonald said you wanted to see me, sir.'

'Yes, get up some rounds of blank for the three-pounders; never mind about rifles: we haven't enough men. I want one man by the engine-room hatch and another one halfway between him and me for passing messages down to the engine-room; it's no good trusting that indicator.'

'Aye, aye, sir.'

'Then when we attack I want you to take charge of the tubes. I shall swing her round pretty sharp, so fire at once when your sights come on. Get them both off if you can. Do you think that torpedo will run straight now?'

'Ought to, sir. It was the gyro that was wrong the other day, and we know that's all right now.'

'Very well; I hope we shall get a show.'

The gunner departed to make his arrangements. The lieutenant leaned wearily against the hooded gun; the pain in his head horribly accentuated by the rhythm of the engines, whose revolutions were making the long slender boat quiver like a struck fiddlestring. Destroyers and torpedo-boats vibrate infinitely more at a low speed than at a high one, and all have some particular number of revolutions at which the vibration touches its maximum. Then you can see from amidships the bow and stern moving up and down in quick regular jerks, as if the hull were an metronome marking time for the devil's orchestra which the steam is conducting in the stokehold and engine-room.

As soon as the open sea came in sight, between the narrow jaws of the loch, the lieutenant stooped down towards the silent figure of the sailor on the deck below him.

'Increase to eighty,' and the boat leaped forward over the long ocean swell, digging the prying nose of her into the waves, until the cap of the unused forward torpedo-tube made a flat opposition to the sea, and threw up showers of spray over the slender slope of the turtle-deck.

He was steering more or less by guesswork, as the binnacle in 140 was aft, in front of the stern steering position, but he knew the coast and the tides of the channel, and believed that for the present at any rate, as he had not to consider a perfectly accurate landfall, he had better make the most of the wider field of vision afforded him by the height of the bridge. He kept a man aft by the compass to report if they were much off their course. But except for their own patrolling destroyers near the mouth of the

loch they sighted nothing save a tramp or two, and presently when they were five miles from the land the lieutenant eased his little fleet down to about ten knots, and moved to the stern steering position. The gunner took the wheel for a moment while his officer and the leading seaman who had been steering forrard in the little bull's-eyed conning-tower moved aft. Two dog-tired stokers emerged from the stokehold and curled themselves up near the foremost funnel in the instantaneous sleep of exhaustion. It was so warm that the old E.R.A. who came up for a short spell of fresh air at the same time let them lie, though he muttered something about silly asses who couldn't be trusted to look after themselves.

By half-past eleven they were within seven or eight miles of Pastick Roads, and the lieutenant made a signal with a lamp from the stern to his consorts that he was going to stop his engines. The throb of the propellers died slowly away and they lay drifting on the long swell, falling into the trough of it and rolling heavily. Torpedo craft are rather like hoops: they find it hard to remain upright unless they are moving. With all lights out each appeared to the other but as a smudge of darkness, a little blacker than the rest of the night.

Yet it was not really dark; the occasional flashes of lightning, away to the south, were not bright enough to eclipse the stars, and the thunder drew near with tantalising slowness.

The lieutenant went below and shook the sleeping sub.

'I'm going to lie down for a bit. Rouse me up at one-thirty, or before if anything happens. Keep in sight of the other boats, and don't make any signal if you can help it. They know what to do.'

The gunner's snores filled the wardroom; Mr. Harrison could do without sleep better than most men, but, like a wise sailor, he always took all he could get—which was little enough on manœuvres. The lieutenant cursed him in a whisper, but forbore to disturb him, and laid himself down on his sofa (the sub and the gunner shared the other one). But sleep would not come to him; only visions and nightmares; late and at length, however, he did fall into a kind of aching doze.

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All of a sudden he was woken by a great shouting on deck, and nearly thrown from his sofa by a violent shock. He started up, hitting his head hard against a lamp, blundered into the gunner, who made way for him to pass, and gained the deck with the

gunner hard at his heels. There was a rush of cold rain in the air, so close and vigorous that objects but a few yards away were invisible. Suddenly with a crackle and a roar the lightning split the night, showing to the men on the torpedo-boat a monstrous towering shape, along which the hull of their little vessel seemed to be slowly passing. It appeared as if something projecting from the side of this leviathan had made a clean sweep of the forward three-pounder, knocking it into the sea. It is to be supposed that there was other damage too; but how much, daylight alone could disclose. The lightning revealed different things to different men, then all was black again. All at once the thunder seemed to burst over and round about the boat; tongues of fire filled the air, and the night was alive with the outcry of the storm.

The next thing the sub remembers clearly is stumbling over a limp and insensible form, and discovering that it was the lieutenant. He shouted for the gunner, but Mr. Harrison had gone forward to get the collision mat out, and did not hear him. Someone touched him on the shoulder, and, standing up, he saw the figure of a small man, who said with a strange, foreign-sounding intonation, though with a good accent:

‘The lieutenant is only stunned. Tell your men to bring him below.’

The sub was not immediately conscious, it seems, of any astonishment at this curious apparition, but groped his way to where the gunner and his sailors were struggling with the collision-mat.

‘Mr. Harrison!’

‘Here, sir.’

‘Are we making much water?’

‘None yet reported anywhere, sir.’

‘Then bring a couple of hands and help me get the lieutenant below. I’m afraid he’s been hurt. By the way, we’ve picked up a passenger.’

‘A passenger?’

‘Yes.’

As gently as possible they lowered the inert body down into the wardroom; the stranger was there already, but said nothing till they had placed the lieutenant on his sofa. By the light of the one lamp which was burning, they could see that he was an Eastern—a Japanese, the gunner at once concluded. He was dressed in the naval uniform common to ourselves and the Japanese, with

the three stripes of a commander, and was exceedingly spick and span. A curious point, the sub remembered afterwards, was that he had no oilskins on, and, in spite of the great rain, appeared to be quite dry.

'I fell off my ship on to yours,' he said; 'now I will make myself useful to you.'

The sub and the gunner looked at each other in amazement; the two sailors with customary lower-deck nonchalance seemed to think that it was all in the night's work and silently beat a retreat.

'You fell off that ship which ran us down?' said the gunner. 'Aren't you hurt? How did you manage it? Oh, well, never mind that now, sir,' he added, looking at the stranger's gold lace.

Meanwhile the little man, working with deft, precise fingers, was feeling about the still form on the settee. Suddenly, before they could have stopped him, had they wished to do so—though the sub says that he felt an unaccountable inclination to acquiesce in all the man did—he took from his pocket a small flask and forced the end between the lieutenant's lips. The immediate result was that the lieutenant sat up and looked about him. Either he did not notice the stranger or else—but conjectures are of no consequence, and the tale is to be told as it happened. He looked at his watch and sprang up with an alarmed expression.

'Time we were moving again,' he said; 'why didn't you wake me sooner, Mac? Anyhow, I feel better for the sleep.'

He rose, and took a step towards the door. The stranger made way for him, but the lieutenant took no notice. They all went on deck, the lieutenant leading. It was pitchy dark and raining more gently; from somewhere close by came the sound of oars.

'Ah! they have lowered a boat for me, I suppose,' said the yellow man.

In a minute or two a boat came alongside—it looked like a man-of-war's cutter, the sub thought. The gunner and the lieutenant had gone forward. The sub had a ridiculous inclination to ask the stranger to have a drink before he went, but all he said was:

'I'm glad you weren't hurt, sir,' and unhooked the gangway-chain so that the man could step over the side into the boat.

An order was given in a foreign tongue, a silent figure in the bow of the boat pushed her off with a boathook, and the night swallowed them up.

The sub stood marvelling, unable to realise the sequence of events. The throb of the propeller brought him to himself with a start. Someone came up behind him in the darkness ; he turned and saw the figure of the gunner, who appeared, though it was too dark to see his face, to be shaken out of his usual cheery nonchalance of manner.

‘Mr. Macdonald, I can’t make out the lootenant ; he’s like a madman, doesn’t seem to think we’ve been in collision or anything, and said something I couldn’t make out about a tiger’s tail and a Russian fleet.’

His voice dropped as another figure joined them.

The lieutenant’s voice rang out clear, without that suspicion of extreme weariness which had been so noticeable earlier in the night.

‘Mr. Harrison, please stand by your tubes. Mac, go forward and keep a look-out. Take a hand with you to bring any messages to me aft.’ He called for the coxswain. ‘Cox’un, take the wheel aft. Look at the beggars showing us where they are ! Steer a bit to the right of that centre searchlight ! I’m going right at ’em.’

The searchlights—there seemed to be several—were sweeping the sea in long steady curves. One or two were burning at a much greater height above the water than the rest ; too high up to be in a ship’s fighting-top. 140 was as yet too far off to be discovered by any watcher behind the lights.

It was curious that no one had seen them until the lieutenant spoke. Perhaps the rain had suddenly lifted. It certainly seemed lighter than it was, and already there was a promise of dawn. From his post forward, where he ensconced himself amidst the ruins of the three-pounder—the gun had gone, leaving its broken and battered pedestal only, and the rails and stanchions of the platform lay bent and twisted—the sub peered into the darkness, carefully refraining from looking directly at the glow of the searchlights, lest his retina should retain their image to the prejudice of anything else the night might suddenly reveal.

‘Dashed odd !’ he thought to himself ; ‘there’s a whole fleet over there.’ He counted at least six lights, though they were still too far off to be perfectly distinct.

Suddenly his attention was arrested by a little flicker of flame away to starboard ; such a flicker as you may see above the funnels of a hard-driven boat or destroyer ; another and yet another caught his eye.

'More boats—I suppose 142 and 143,' he thought, and watched them for a few moments. The faint will-o'-the-wisp-like flames were coming up, wide on the starboard bow. He knew from the feel of 140 that she was going pretty fast—something not very much short of her best pace, yet these others were passing her as if she were standing still. He called down to his messenger. 'Tell the lieutenant there are several vessels coming up very fast on the starboard bow. I think they are destroyers.' The sailor stumbled aft along the encumbered deck. He stopped by the torpedo-tubes, which were now trained over to port, and told the gunner, whose head and shoulders only were visible in the manhole between the tubes, what the sub had said, and then reported to the lieutenant.

'Tell Mr. Macdonald they're our own boats,' was all he got for an answer.

The first division of destroyers—if destroyers they were—was by now nearly straight ahead of 140, crossing her course at an obtuse angle and drawing away from her at a great rate. A few minutes afterwards Macdonald reported another division, and again another.

140 had evidently run into the midst of a whole flotilla of torpedo-craft, who were proceeding in much the same direction as themselves, presumably with a similar intention. The last division Macdonald sighted came almost within biscuit-throw of him, and he was practically certain that he had been right in supposing them to be destroyers, for the night was a little clearer now, and he could roughly make out their outline. It is remarkably easy, however, to mistake one type of craft for another at night, and a torpedo-boat has before now been mistaken for a battleship, and *vice versa*. Whatever they were they took no notice of 140, nor she of them.

Half an hour after the last of the dancing flames had been swallowed up in the night, one of the wandering searchlights touched 140 for a moment with its glare. Instantly the helm was put hard over, and the boat swung round out of the broad track of the light. There is nothing more difficult than to tell how near or how far away a searchlight may be; but if when it touches you it makes everything plain round about, it is certainly not a very great distance away. The beam swung slowly on; then came back again as if looking for the boat, which began to tremble with a close whirr of machinery as the engineers gave the racing engines all the steam the sweating stokers could coax out of the boilers.

Suddenly from out of the darkness ahead of them leapt the noise of guns. Away on the port bow the night was on the instant flecked with red tongues of fire, and Macdonald could see clearly enough now a destroyer pinned by the unrelenting glare of a searchlight.

Good God ! what was that ? The sub rose from his crouching position, steadying himself with one hand on the smashed pedestal mounting. *It was not blank cartridge the ships were using, but shot and shell.* The screech of a projectile was in his ear ; the water on one side of the turtle-deck was hissing with a rain of bullets ; something hit an iron plate at his feet with a clang. He noticed dimly that the ray of the searchlight which for a second had picked out the hurrying boat had swung away towards the commotion to his left. Straight ahead a ship opened a rapid fire. Projectiles sang and wailed overhead, whether aimed at 140 or not he could not tell. The dense mass of a towering hull thickened the void. With a sweep that brought him to his knees the boat swung round to starboard. Something leapt into the water, there was a dull explosion, the hail of shot ceased, and as they fled into the night he heard faintly shouts and cries as of men angry or confused. -

Then his senses left him.

When he came to himself it was very early morning. A grey sky looked down on a grey sea ; in the east a little rosy light ran before the sun, not yet risen. The boat lay motionless on the quiet ocean. He tried to collect his thoughts ; where was he ? What had happened ? He had blood on his forehead, and a wound smarted as he touched his head with a doubtful hand. He looked stupidly along the deck. Heavens, what a wreck ! One funnel knocked crooked, davits smashed, dinghy gone, searchlight overboard, ventilators twisted out of shape ; where was everybody ? He made his way aft painfully. Two figures lay as if asleep at the foot of the foremost funnel ; the two stokers who had laid themselves down to sleep ; their fate had touched them and they lay dead. Across one of the tubes lay the body of the gunner ; he was not dead, but groaned a little as the sub shook him, and presently recovered his senses. All the ship's company—nineteen souls—lay dead or unconscious on the deck or in the foc's'le, in the engine-room, in the stokehold, in the wardroom.

The lieutenant was dead, with a blue wound like a bullet-hole in his head. He lay on his sofa in the wardroom in the same position as that in which the stranger had placed him. The signal-

man lay on the deck with a broken neck ; the rest had escaped with their lives, though scarce one but had some injury more or less severe. The less damaged bound up the wounds of the more damaged, hardly speaking. Meanwhile 140 was slowly sinking. Her bows were deep and her stern was high ; and she had several feet of water in the engine-room. 142 sighted her just in time to take off her crew, living and dead, before she stood upright, with her stern in the air, for a second or two, and then dived into twenty fathoms of water.

'You never saw such a wreck,' Cleland told me. 'She looked just as if she had been in action. I could hardly have believed it possible for lightning to have done so much damage. Her people seemed stunned and dazed, and most of them were like that for days, I believe. The funny thing was they had some strange delusion that they had actually made an attack on some ships at anchor somewhere and been shot at, and there was something about a yellow man and a ship's cutter which Mac told me. He said he had forgotten all about it when I asked him again, a week later, though. No ; they never tried to get her up—she sank too deep, and anyhow was too old to be worth the expense of raising.'

The sub was of course tried by court-martial for the loss of the ship as the senior surviving officer, and one or two facts worth mentioning came to light at the inquiry—namely, that there had been no Red battleship in Pastick Roads that night, and no other fighting ships of any kind within eighty nautical miles of 140 at the time of the disaster, except 142 and 143, which had lost sight of 140 in the storm, and after fruitlessly searching the Roads were returning to their rendezvous when they sighted 140.

In view of these facts, when the coxswain, in giving evidence, told a tale which agreed pretty much with what has here been set forth, he was looked upon as affected in the brain and sent to the naval asylum, from which place, as he still stuck to the truth of his story, he was finally discharged from the service as harmlessly insane. The rest of the ship's company one and all professed total oblivion of things mundane after the thunderbolt had struck them, until the morning.

The sub and the gunner, after the court-martial, during which they did not exchange a word, saw no more of each other for nearly two years, when they found themselves shipmates again in a newly commissioned battleship of the Channel Fleet. The sub had gained another stripe by then.

The two had a quiet talk one day, in the morning early, when the decks were running with water during the great ship's first ablutions. It was Macdonald's watch, and I think the gunner must have been on deck by design, with the desire and intention, if opportunity served, of a chat with the officer of the watch.

'I'm always thinking of that night, sir,' he said; 'there was a great deal that didn't come out at the court-martial. I discovered one funny thing just before 142 came to pick us off; our warheads, which of course were loaded with a full charge of gun-cotton in them, were gone, and the collision-heads, which I could swear I had screwed on to the torpedoes myself, were in their place. I went down into the warhead magazine to look for something I thought I had left there, and it gave me an extra twist to see those collision-heads sitting there.

'Then the other day, when the fleet was at Cherbourg, I made friends on shore with a French matlow. We were talking one evening at a caffay when he pulled out a piece of paper, which he had kept for some time from the look of it, and showed it to me, wanting to know what I thought of it. It was a piece of a Russian paper which they printed in Port Arthur during the siege, and had a translation in French tacked on to the end of it, in ink. I forget the words, but the sense was that the perfidious Japs had made another unsuccessful attack on their ships in the outer Roads, and had this time only holed one of them, as the destroyers had been discovered in time. But a remarkable thing was, they said, that a torpedo had been picked up on the beach which had a "taille"—meaning calibre, I suppose, sir—of fourteen inches—that's what the millimetres worked out to—and on it were the letters R.G.F.¹ This had naturally surprised them a bit, as the Japs had only used 18-inch torpedoes; but they didn't seem to have tumbled to what the letters and the other marks on it meant, or there would have been more international complications. I suppose they were too busy to worry much about it, anyhow.'

The officer mused for a while.

'Yes, that was an odd thing, but I know an odder. I went to the poor skipper's funeral, down in Surrey, and stayed the night with his people, who were awfully cut up. Next morning I went to have a look at the grave on my way to the station; it was all covered in flowers; a man was stooping over it, who hurried away when he saw me staring; he was obviously a Jap, and very like the

I.e. Royal Gun Factory, Woolwich

man we saw that night. At the head of the grave, in the middle of a wreath of flowers—some kind of chrysanthemums they were, I think—was this. I couldn't leave it there, it would only have puzzled and worried his people.'

He pulled something from his pocket.

'What is it, sir?'

'A Japanese decoration, given, as a rule, only for distinguished gallantry in action.'

The gunner gaped. 'Well, sir, I shouldn't be surprised if the Russians really did see Japanese torpedo-boats in the North Sea that night, after what you and I know,' was all he said.

H. B. M.-C.

THE ELECTRIC THEORY OF MATTER.

I READ the other day in an eloquent article in one of our leading weekly reviews that the most striking discovery of modern times has been the 'transmutation of the elements'; and that while the seventy or eighty known elements have long been suspected by philosophers to be compounded from one and the same kind of matter, there has now been observed the actual transformation of uranium into radium, and of radium into helium, and perhaps also into lead. Now in these statements there is very much which is open to question; hence the perusal of this article has suggested to me that many readers of the CORNHILL might welcome at this moment a brief account of the latest phase of the ever-recurring idea that every bit of matter in every form may consist, really, of the same ultimate material—namely, of the new theory of matter, which suggests that the chemical atoms which make up all matter are constituted solely of systems of electric charges.

As the fate of this latest reading of the riddle of the mystery of matter still lies on the lap of the gods, it may seem to some that the subject is not very well suited for the pages of the CORNHILL. I believe, however, that those who hold this view are wrong. If we wish cultivated men and women to take a living interest in the progress of science, and to be able, as they very well might be, to avoid falling into such mistakes as those to be found in the article referred to above, we must not ask them always to be content with the realised knowledge of the text-book and the museum, though these are very good things in their places, but go with them now and then into the workshop and there show them science in the making. This is what I propose to attempt on the present occasion.

Before we enter the theory shop, and endeavour to follow the growth of the 'electric theory of matter,' I must ask those who go there with me to stay for a moment outside its doors, that we may recall one or two matters of considerable importance. In the first place we must remember that a scientific theory has to perform two distinct functions, viz. to record a larger or smaller

number of isolated, or seemingly isolated, facts, and to give us some clear idea of a connection between these facts, so that we may become able to deduce them one from another and predict new facts that may be discovered by means of new experiments suggested by the theory. Secondly, we must remember that a theory, like a tree, is to be judged by its fruits, and that an unproductive theory, like an unfruitful tree, must be cast into the fire. It is very important that we do not forget this, for the hypothesis which forms the subject of this article is as yet incomplete; its fruits have still to be gathered and tested. There is much which suggests that in due course the electric theory of matter may prove as fruitful as the atomic theory of the nineteenth century, but the electric theory to-day, like the atomic theory a century ago, is still imperfect, still upon its trial. If we may compare it to a tool, we may say that at present we have not the finished tool, but only a rough casting from which, perhaps, a finished tool may be constructed before long.

I need hardly say that it is important also that my readers should have a clear idea what it is the electric theory of matter has to explain. Perhaps we shall best discover how we stand on this point if we ask ourselves the question, What is matter and what are the isolated facts about matter which this theory must co-ordinate? Now, this question is very difficult to answer. Most of us know a good deal about the surface differences which distinguish the myriad forms in which matter presents itself to us, but our real knowledge of its nature and constitution is slight indeed. According to J. S. Mill, matter is 'the permanent possibility of sensations.' According to W. K. Clifford, it 'is a mental picture in which mind-stuff is the thing represented,' while 'mind-stuff is constituted by feelings which can exist by themselves, without forming part of a consciousness, but are also woven into the complex form of human minds.' For our present purpose, however, speculations like these retain only an historic importance. For us, as the late Professor Tait has expressed it, the universe, including matter, has an objective existence, and we become aware of it by the aid of our senses; and, since the evidence of the senses often misleads, we endeavour to sift the mixture of truth and error gained by the use of our senses by the exercise of the reason; for example, by forming theories such as the atomic theory of Dalton and the electric theory of the new physics.

According to the electric theory, matter in all its forms consists,

as I have said, of systems of electric charges. This idea is the outcome of the work of the atomist Dalton and his colleagues on the one hand, and of the work of Faraday and his great successors on the other. Broadly speaking, we may say that Dalton re-invented atoms for the use of the chemists; that the physicists, with Prof. J. J. Thomson at their head, discovered the existence of particles, called 'electrons,' even smaller than atoms; and that the authors of the electric theory hope to establish the nature of the electron, and to discover the relation of the electron to the atom.

It will not be necessary to consider in detail the atomic molecular theory, for this has been fully discussed already in the CORNHILL.¹ It will be sufficient if we remember that according to chemists matter exists only in the form of a limited number of elements, about eighty of these being known to us; that each of these elements occurs in the form of characteristic minute indestructible particles called 'atoms'; and that it was long believed that atoms constituted the smallest existing particles of matter. I suppose that in modern times few investigators have really believed of any given atom that it would exist for ever, or had existed in the past from all eternity. But some of the greatest masters of the modern school, *e.g.* Clerk-Maxwell, have held there is reason to believe that 'the creation of an atom is an operation of a kind which is not, so far as we are aware, going on on earth or in the sun or in the stars, either now or since these bodies began to be formed,' and must be referred to the epoch of the establishment of the existing order of Nature. The facts known to Clerk-Maxwell when he wrote the above words gave him no reason to suspect that possibly chemical atoms might now and then undergo disintegration under our noses. But to-day, though we are as incompetent as ever to create an atom out of nothing, we are no longer quite convinced that atoms are the smallest particles of matter. This does not mean that the molecular atomic theory is used up and ready for the scrap-heap, for the idea of the atom is as necessary and as useful as ever. But atoms no longer seem to us, as to Newton, to be solid, massy, hard, impenetrable, indivisible portions of matter. On the contrary, it has become conceivable that they may consist of constellations of much smaller particles; that they may be built up, that is, of parts and possess in each case a definite structure which, sooner or later, we may hope to fathom.

¹ See 'New Physics and Chemistry,' 'Weighing Atoms.'

Although, as I have said, we need not dwell for long on the properties of matter, there are two or three points which we must keep in our minds. First we must remember that every particle of matter, great and small, exhibits what is known as 'attraction of gravitation'; secondly, that every particle exhibits also a kind of passivity or dogged perseverance, called 'inertia,' in virtue of which every body 'perseveres in its state of rest or of uniform motion in a straight line unless it is compelled by some force to change that state.' This implies that if at any time a particle of matter of sensible mass should cease to be subject to attraction of gravitation, or should lose its inertia, we should have to regard it as destroyed.

The idea that matter in general may be electrical in its origin possesses a charm for many minds, because it seems as if it might afford us a stepping-stone from which we might hope to proceed towards the attainment of a clear idea of a simple material universe composed of a single primitive matter analogous to that primary matter which Prout a century ago imagined to be the basis of the chemical elements. It is founded upon the view of electricity which regards the latter as possessing an atomic constitution, and looks upon a certain quantity of electricity as an indivisible unit, as a sort of atom of electricity, which can be increased only by adding other units to it, like adding bricks to a wall, but cannot be divided or diminished by any means yet at our disposal.

I suppose everyone has seen the beautiful luminous glow of a vacuum tube. This glow is produced by connecting the poles of an electrical machine to two wires melted into the two ends of a glass tube, and exhausting the tube moderately by means of an air-pump. If the vacuum tube in the state in which it gives this glow be further exhausted, its luminosity gradually disappears, breaking up into discs which grow fewer and fewer as the exhaustion proceeds, until at last, if the exhaustion is pushed far enough, no light is seen except a glowing phosphorescence on the surface of the glass, like that which we see when watching experiments with Röntgen-ray tubes. It was inside vacuum tubes when highly exhausted that Prof. J. J. Thomson recognised in 1897 particles far smaller than hydrogen atoms and charged with negative electricity.

If we obtain a glass tube such as I have described, provided at its two ends with two platinum wires sealed into the glass

so that the joints are perfectly air-tight, exhaust it by means of an air-pump until only about one part in a million of the air originally present in the tube remains there, connect the wires to an electrical machine, and made suitable experiments, we shall discover that though the tube does not become luminous like an ordinary vacuum tube, yet it seems to contain something which exhibits some very remarkable properties. For example, if before exhausting the tube we have placed inside it in front of the cathode and at a convenient distance a piece of platinum foil, a diamond, or a ruby, then, when we start the machine, the platinum will soon get hot, as a piece of metal does when it is hammered, whilst the diamond or ruby will become phosphorescent. Even if we have put no solid object in the tube, somewhat similar phenomena will present themselves, for in this case the glass of the tube will glow brightly over a considerable area opposite the cathode as soon as the electric machine is put in action, and becomes hot, as if it were bombarded violently by something thrown off by the cathode; and these effects will be accompanied, as I should explain, by the production of Röntgen rays, and occasionally, if one is not careful, by the melting of the glass of the tube.

I think everyone will agree that the above phenomena decidedly suggest, as they did to Sir William Crookes when he first observed them, the idea that though the tube must be nearly empty, since only a very minute fraction of the original air remains inside it, streams of something are being driven from the cathode through the tube; that the cathode under the influence of the electric machine creates, in fact, a sort of wind inside the tube; a wind more or less like other winds, but probably exceeding other winds greatly in its velocity, since no wind we are acquainted with outside a vacuum tube is sufficiently violent to melt glass or to raise particles of metal to a red heat.

The idea that streams of invisible particles are thrown off from the cathode of the Crookes vacuum tube has been confirmed by other experiments. If we vary the construction of a vacuum tube by placing the anode not opposite the cathode as described above,¹ but in other positions, we discover that though both a cathode and an anode are required, it is not necessary to place the anode at that part of the tube on which we wish the supposed bombardment to fall. For, place the anode where we may, we find in

¹ The two wires fused into the vacuum tube are known as the 'anode' and 'cathode' respectively.

every case that the radiation flies from the cathode in straight lines, like bullets from a gun, refusing to turn corners except under the influence of a magnet, till it is arrested by some obstacle such as a stone or a small windmill, in which case it will work the windmill as an aerial wind might do, or, if unimpeded, till it falls upon the glassy walls of the tube itself. Moreover, when obstacles are placed in the path of the radiations shadows are formed, as if the radiations were unable to pass through them. The power of obstacles to arrest cathode rays probably is not perfect, however, for it is found that these rays escape to some extent from a vacuum tube if they fall upon a window made of a very thin sheet of a metal such as aluminium. But though the rays insist on moving in straight lines and refuse to turn corners, if a small beam of cathode rays be thrown on a sheet of card coated with some phosphorescent paint, the luminous spot produced where the beam falls upon the paint can readily be moved from one point to another by bringing a powerful magnet to bear upon the beam in its road to the screen. This seems to show that cathode rays can be waved about by the magnet. If we remember the appearance and movements of the rays of a searchlight cast from a ship which is feeling its way on an unknown coast, and recall how these rays reveal themselves partly by illuminating the dust particles in the air through which they pass, but chiefly by the illumination they produce when they fall on any adjacent or distant object—for example, on a ship, on the shore, or even on the surface of the sea—we shall gain some idea, though an imperfect idea, of the effect produced by a magnet on a beam of cathode rays inside a Crookes tube. The little spot of light under the influence of the magnet plays about upon the screen, now here, now there, making it plain that the invisible beam which produces the visible light must move about inside the tube more or less as the rays of a searchlight move in the sky at night-time. Now, this power of the magnet upon cathode rays is not only useful because it gives us a means of controlling the cathode rays, but also because it gives us a very strong hint about the nature of the rays themselves.

It is well known to physicists that streams of particles carrying charges of electricity act under the influence of magnets like currents of electricity in conductors. Now, currents in conductors can be deflected by means of magnets, which suggests that the cathode rays, since they behave like currents under the

influence of magnets, may consist of particles carrying electric charges. And, further, the known facts of the case tell us that the charges on these particles are negative charges, for the movements of cathode rays under the influence of magnets are just those which we should expect to observe in the case of particles carrying negative electricity.

The cathode rays, then, may be supposed to consist of particles of some sort carrying negative charges of electricity. This brings us to the question, What is the nature of these particles? Are they molecules like those which build up matter in its various and familiar forms? Or are they the yet smaller atoms of the chemist, which form, as it were, the bricks from which molecules are built up? Or, again, are they 'radiant matter' or matter in a 'fourth state,' as Sir William Crookes, by a brilliant flash of genius, suggested nearly thirty years ago? We owe the solution of this problem chiefly to Prof. J. J. Thomson, who succeeded, a few years ago, in counting the particles in a cathode ray, determined the quantity of electricity carried by each, and showed us that they are neither molecules nor atoms, but particles about a thousand times smaller than atoms; and that each of them carries a charge of electricity equal to that carried by an atom of hydrogen in electrolysis, the very quantity, in fact, which, as far as we know, has never been divided, and for that reason has been described as an 'atom of electricity.'

If these particles, or electrons, as they are now commonly named, exhibited only the properties described above, and occurred only in the vacuum tube, the discovery of their existence, of their minute size, their electric charges, and their other remarkable properties would have been sufficiently interesting. But it happens that they have the power of making atmospheric air, which is, ordinarily, an insulator, conduct electricity. This made it possible to look for them outside as well as inside vacuum tubes, and presently it came to be known—first, that they do not exist only in the vacuum tube, but are given off by metals when they are intensely hot and when illuminated by ultra-violet light, also by uranium, thorium, radium, and other radio-active substances at ordinary temperatures, and perhaps, though this can hardly be said to be finally established at present, in some minute degree by all the more familiar forms of matter. Secondly, that electrons from all these sources resemble one another in regard to their size and to the charge of electricity which they carry; that is to say

that, so far as we can ascertain at present, they have the same properties whatever their source may be. We do not get one kind of electron from radium, another kind from thorium, a third in the vacuum tube from hydrogen, a fourth from nitrogen, and so on, but the same electron from every substance.

Now, this last conclusion, if finally established, that atoms of all kinds emit identical electrons, bears most obviously on the great question, Is all matter composed of the same ultimate material? For since electrons so similar in their qualities are produced from so many and such varied sources, and perhaps by all forms of matter, does it not follow that the atoms of all the elements—that is, all matter—have in these electrons a common constituent? Indeed, pressing the argument to the utmost, is it not possible that all matter may be built up entirely of systems of electrons and nothing else; that we have discovered in the electrons the ‘*protyle*’ of the earlier philosophers?

I have already mentioned that Prof. Thomson, in one of the most brilliant of modern researches, has measured the masses and charges of electrons; that he has found the former to be about a thousand times smaller than the mass of the smallest particles of matter previously known, and that the latter correspond to the so-called atom of electricity; viz. the charge carried by an atom of hydrogen in electrolysis. We know, further, that electrons move very rapidly, some of them travelling, in fact, with velocities comparable with that of light itself. Thus we know that electrons possess mass or inertia, the most fundamental property of matter, and move with immense velocities. Now, it has been known for some time to electricians that a current of electricity in circuit may act inductively upon itself so as to oppose its own flow when it is growing and retard its own decay when it is diminishing; in short, that electricity exhibits a quality akin to the ‘*inertia*’ of matter, which tends to retain every material body in its state of rest or uniform motion in a straight line except so far as it is compelled by forces to change that state. This at once raises for us the new question, May not the mass or inertia of an electron be wholly due or partly due to its electric charge? which brings us within sight of the hypothesis that matter and its properties are electric in their origin.

It is known that the inertia of a body charged with electricity remains, practically speaking, constant under changes of velocity until its rate of movement approaches such a value as 18,000 miles

per second,¹ but that at about this point the inertia begins to increase sensibly, and at such a rate that it would become infinite if the speed of the charged particle became equal to that of light; and, secondly, that though electrons move more slowly than light, yet some of those thrown off by radium do not move so very much less rapidly than light. Finally, the results of an investigation made a few years ago by Dr. Kaufmann have shown that at the highest speeds yet met with the mass of the electron increases to no less than three times its value when moving more slowly. These facts, naturally, have suggested to many the idea that possibly the whole mass of these charged particles may arise from their electric charges. But on this view, if we accept it, 'electrons' would not be particles of matter carrying electric charges, but particles, so to speak, of electricity itself, or, as some might prefer to say, 'disembodied electric charges.' And then, if we go so far, we have only to suppose that all matter is made of electrons, and matter itself disappears and is replaced by electricity, that is, by 'nuclei of intrinsic strain in the ether,' or whatever else electricity may be.

Faraday showed us long ago that chemical actions between portions of matter are indistinguishable from electrical actions; and now, at this latest stage, we find his successors suggesting that matter and electricity themselves can no longer be clearly and definitely distinguished from one another. But this is only a suggestion, it by no means establishes the truth of the electrical theory of matter, or proves that the eighty elements all are compounded of one single uniform material. It gives us, perhaps, the beginnings of a working hypothesis, a plan of campaign, and some new resources to aid us in our studies. That is all. We are still very far from knowing definitely that atoms are comprised entirely of electrons, or that electrons are nothing more than electric charges; and though electrons have been shown to exhibit electric inertia, it has not been proved that the inertia of atoms is also electrical. And then, again, in what is said above we have taken no count of positive electricity, and till positive electricity is better understood than it is at present further progress must remain very difficult.

In spite of these obstacles various attempts have been made to paint with the pigments put at our command by electricians a mind-picture of a simple atom such as a hydrogen atom. One of these suggests to us that an atom may be composed of a

¹ This is about one-tenth of the velocity of light.

number of positive and negative particles clustered together in virtue of their mutual attractions, the charged particles being, perhaps, in orbital motion about one another, or possibly held together in fixed positions in some other way. A second suggestion submits the hypothesis that an atom may consist of a comparatively large sphere of positive electrification, which may be pictured as more or less like a jelly, with a greater or larger number of the very small negative electrons moving about inside it, the total number of the negative electrons depending on the amount of the positive electrification of the sphere; whilst yet another hypothesis suggests that the hydrogen atom may consist of a sort of sun of dense positive electricity acting as a centre round which many negative electrons revolve in astronomical orbits. These speculations vary more or less in the matter of hopefulness, but none of them is definite enough to demand fuller consideration here, and I have introduced them only because each of them brings us face to face with the same serious obstacle to further progress. Each, it will be observed, involves in one form or another the idea of a positive as well as of a negative constituent of the atom. Now at this moment we know little or nothing about free positive electrons, and it is not even agreed universally that positive electrons exist at all; some students holding that positive electrification consists merely in a defect of electricity, and that a positively electrified particle is only what remains when an electron has been removed or expelled from an atom—a view which carries us back almost to the days of Franklin, who held that there was but one electric fluid, a positively electrified body being one which had an excess of this fluid and a negatively electrified body one which had comparatively little.

It must be admitted that we do not yet know that matter is made up entirely of electrons, or even that these constitute a very substantial part of the whole. The evidence is strong, though for want of space I have not been able to give it all, that electrons are a universal constituent of atoms, but there is little or no evidence as yet that atoms are composed of electricity and nothing else. On the other hand, in spite of a plentiful lack of evidence on this last point, and of some recent observations which are difficult to reconcile with the idea that electricity is the fundamental material of matter, the facts before us are of such a character that they seem bound to encourage attempts, which do not look altogether hopeless, to explain matter in terms of electricity.

To sum up, what has been attained is this. We have reached a deduction which—as Sir Oliver Lodge says in his book on ‘Electrons’—teaches us ‘that negative electricity can exist apart from matter in isolated portions, each of exceedingly minute known size, known charge, and known inertia, and we think that the laws of mechanics applied to such particles in given fields of electric and magnetic force should carry us on towards explaining the fundamental phenomena of electric currents, of magnetism, and of the production of light.’ But it has still to be discovered whether or not the ‘inertia’ of all matter, and hence its nature and properties generally, can be explained, as light has been explained, as electro-magnetic phenomena. We are, so to speak, in the position of Lord Roberts when he landed at Cape Town in the year 1900. We have a plan in our heads, and some of but not all the resources needed to carry it out. But as yet we have won no final victory, established no transmutation, discovered no protyle from which we can reconstruct the material universe, even in our minds. I hope this does not seem disappointing. If it does, let us remember that after centuries of study we still have no plan of campaign for investigating the propagation of gravity through the ether; then we shall not undervalue the recent advances on which these modern speculations about matter and its origin are based.

W. A. SHENSTONE.

HERDS OF THE MOUNTAIN.

ONE August evening, just as we had returned from a long day's fishing, there came a ring at the telephone, that universal means of communication in Norway, and in a few moments our Norwegian parlourmaid appeared.

'They say,' said she, 'that a bear has killed a sheep up the valley, and the farmer wants to know if you will go after it.'

Would we go bear-hunting? Indeed but we would! Of all the trophies within a limited range of possibilities a Norwegian bear was at that time, and, for the matter of that, still is, the most coveted. Besides, this was the first bear of which we had had news, and our ardour was as yet altogether undamped by frequent failure. Early next morning we started off down the valley towards the scene of the bear's depredations. Viewed in the light of subsequent experience, our chances were not large; we had not even a dog with us—a first requisite for successful bear-hunting—but they seemed rosy enough that morning all the same.

We hunted vigorously all day among the birch scrub and stones of a steep hillside, seeing no bear, but generally enjoying ourselves, until the evening warned us that it was time to look about for quarters for the night. There was a little *sæter* in the neighbourhood, and to this we repaired and asked for food and a sleeping-place. Hospitable as always, the *sæter* folk not only took us in, but gave us of their best—great bowls of curdled cream left to stand until it has turned a trifle sour, and known to the Norwegians as *rømme*.

Now at that time we were unacquainted with the deadly properties of *rømme*, and, besides, we were all of us desperately hungry, so, urged perhaps by the taunts of our henchman Peder, who declared that 'empty he could eat two basins full,' we did the meal full justice and then retired to rest. It was an uneasy night. We had prudently abjured the bed, but, even so, the inhabitants of the *sæter* descended upon us in their thousands, combining with the *rømme* to make the hours of darkness hideous. Long we lay and listened to the tinkle of the cow-bells outside,

but at last sleep found us. I have a dim recollection of waking up in the small hours of the morning, and seeing Geoffrey sitting up motionless in his corner, trying to sketch the picturesque interior with its recumbent occupants; but I must have dropped off to sleep again, for about 4 A.M. Geoffrey had gone for an early wash in a glacier stream hard by. I was awakened by his hurried return with the news that he had seen a big reindeer buck on the hillside opposite. Never was a *saeter* more promptly evacuated. Yes, there he was, not 500 yards away, a splendid buck feeding all alone, quite unconscious of the proximity of man, the biggest beast, so the Norwegians said, that they had ever seen.

Alas that the shooting season had not begun! Hungrily we watched him as he moved slowly up the hill, stood for a while with his great horns showing splendid above the skyline, and then passed quietly out of view. That was our first sight of the wild reindeer.

A fortnight later we were once more driving up the valley, this time to meet our hunter Iver at the head. So strange a character was Iver that I think he deserves a word of introduction. In the limited democracy of a Norwegian valley, a man, in order to be considered of any account, must be able to do at least one thing better than his neighbour. To be 'the best man in the valley' at something is a position keenly contested among the able-bodied inhabitants, and widely recognised by all. Everyone who has travelled in Norway has noticed how his driver or gillie will point out to him the best fiddler or fighter or dancer or singer in the valley, with appropriate tales of his prowess.

Iver had two of these feathers to his cap. In the first place, he was the best reindeer hunter in the valley. During his life he had killed 700 reindeer, and his position in this respect was undisputed. Secondly, he was the best ski-runner in the district. About his achievements in this direction the following tale was told.

There was a certain Ole who was accounted nearly as good a man on ski as Iver himself. One day a mutual friend was passing with Iver along a road that ran above an almost precipitous hill-face all studded with boulders, and this individual thought he would have a joke at Iver's expense. 'There,' said he, 'Ole went down that hill the other day.' Needless to say, Ole had done nothing of the kind. But Iver's pride was touched. 'If Ole can do it, so can I,' said he, and before his friend could stop him

he had started down the hill. Strangest of all, perhaps, he reached the bottom in safety.

For all this, Iver was not popular with the valley folk. I think they were half afraid of him. Certainly one story that they told was sufficiently alarming. Like many Norwegians, he had in his time emigrated to America, and, like many more, when he got there he found he did not like it. The result was that he arrived home one dark night unexpectedly. His wife, who, of course, did not know of his coming, had bolted the door, and refused to let the stranger in. 'I'll soon show you who I am,' cried Iver, and forthwith discharged his rifle point-blank through the keyhole. 'Now I know that it is Iver,' said she, and straightway opened the door. Finally, in person, Peder told us, he was 'very small, very strong, and had a voice so like one bear.'

It may easily be imagined that we looked forward with some trepidation to our meeting with this formidable individual. But we might have spared our anxiety. Taken all in all, he was a genial old scoundrel, and did much to make our stay a pleasant one.

We had arranged to hunt from Iver's farm, and this, I think, was a mistake, for it was some distance from the best reindeer ground, and we spent much precious time daily in going and returning. Worse than that, as the season drew on, the *sæters* higher up the valley grew thronged with native hunters, who were too often up and on to the field before we, with our longer distance to travel, could reach it. Still, for the time being, we were well contented with our quarters. The house was a typical small Norwegian farm, log-built and turf-roofed, with a reindeer's head stuck up on one of the gables. There was just room for us all during the daytime, but the sleeping accommodation was limited. To us, as yet unversed in Norwegian customs, it seemed strange that Iver, the apparent head of the household, should at nightfall meekly retire into the hayloft, there to sleep, leaving his son Martinus in undisputed possession of a good bed in the house. But in time this, together with many other seeming mysteries, was explained. In Norway, when the son of the house marries, the responsibilities of the father, however hale and vigorous he may be, are ended. The son henceforth is head of the house, the father merely a pensioner upon the premises. At first sight this seems a hard custom, yet it carries its own compensations. No matter how the son fares, even though he be compelled to sell the property

the father's position remains secure ; he merely passes to the new owner as a burden upon the property, with precisely the same rights and privileges as he had before. It is not a bad system. The young and able-bodied have the management of the farms, and at the same time the old are provided for.

We had arrived two days before the season began, and as we had brought no books the time lay heavily upon our hands, until in a happy moment we discovered a volume called 'The Anglo-Norwegian Reader.' Behind this modest title lay a fund of quiet humour. It was written on the usual principle : the author told a short story, and then turned upon his reader and subjected him to a relentless cross-examination on the story that he was supposed to have read. Thus, we were reading the story of a young Norwegian who, being jilted by a young lady named Peggy, emigrated to America and married a black girl, Susan, 'who was worth a hundred Peggies.' At this point our eyes instinctively sought the foot of the page. 'How much was Susan worth?' queried the cross-examiner. Sure enough, prompt came the answer, 'A hundred Peggies!'

For all this, we were glad enough when the day arrived to make an early start, especially when we heard that another party further down the valley had designs upon the ground which we intended to hunt.

About 3.30 we stuffed some lunch into our pockets and were ready to start, Geoffrey with Martinus, I with Iver and Peder. Both Iver and Martinus had arrayed themselves in shirts of white sacking, a colour which, though surprising to the uninitiated, harmonises beautifully with the snow patches and whity-grey gneiss of the hillside. Iver, moreover, went forth to battle in a pair of gigantic Wellingtons or *støvler* ; Martinus wore elastic-sided boots of the kind known as *Jemimas*.

For hill-hunting, the day could hardly have been worse. The weather was threatening when we started, and before we reached the high fjeld we were enveloped in clouds of driving mist, which later developed into a storm of sleet and snow with a bitter wind behind it. However, we plodded on in the hope that the weather might clear. Sometimes for a few moments the sky grew lighter, and we caught a glimpse of the sun struggling to break through ; more often the flying scud blotted out every object fifty yards away. I soon discovered that Iver was a past master in the art of finding his way. In spite of every difficulty he steered a perfectly

straight course without hesitation to the point for which he was making.

And then, about two o'clock in the afternoon, the mist cleared off, and in half an hour we could see above us.

Beneath our feet a miniature snowfield fell away to a little lake of that intense blue that only snow water produces; beyond, the high fjeld stretched far away, rising and falling in waves of rocks and snow to the horizon.

The reindeer is, so far as I know, the only deer that of its own free will has permanently forsaken the shelter of the forest. Certainly evolution has endowed it with characteristics differing widely from those of woodland animals. It has sharp eyes, which deer that live in the woods have not; it invariably runs up wind, whereas the woodland deer, as often as not, do not run away at all, but seek to elude their pursuer in the thick timber. These same characteristics are to be observed in the case of the Scottish red deer, most of whom, through pressure of circumstances, and not through predilection, are compelled to live all the year upon the hill; but I should say that the reindeer, much more than the Scottish red deer, was influenced by the wind. I have been told by good hunters that, after a week's strong wind from one quarter, nearly every reindeer will have travelled to the up-wind edge of the fjeld, leaving the rest of the country almost deserted.

It is hard to understand how the reindeer contrives to exist and keep fat in that barren and inhospitable region. Lichens and white reindeer-moss for the most part are his portion, but his favourite food is a big white or pink ranunculus which grows among stones in wet places, preferably upon the lower sides of the patches of snow. So fond is he of this that its presence or absence is considered a good rough test as to whether or no the deer frequent that particular part of the fjeld.

That day we saw no deer. On our way back we halted at a *sæter* and had some coffee. The beans were ground between two stones, and the coffee was cleared after the Norwegian fashion by dipping a piece of saithe skin into the brew. Then we went on refreshed, and arrived at our farm just as darkness was setting in.

The next day it was my turn to go out with Martinus. The morning was warm and bright, but later the sky clouded over and a thin misty rain began to fall. It was on our way back, late in the afternoon, that we came upon a herd of six or seven deer; but my telescope had become blurred with the rain, and in the

dull light it was impossible to tell what sort of beasts they were, so we started in pursuit. The stalk was absurdly easy, for the deer had moved down into a gulley, and there was nothing to do but to walk up to them. When we reached the gulley they had fled out of sight, but we soon spied them again, so I left Martinus behind and crawled forward to a big stone within 150 yards of the deer. In the bad light, and against the grey stone back-ground, I could not make out the horns, the only criterion of size to which I could trust. Slowly the deer filed past, quite unconscious of danger, but all so far undoubtedly *simle* (does). Then came one considerably larger than the rest. I could just make out the broad bases of the horns close to the skull; so, making no doubt that he was my beast, I took a quiet aim and pressed the trigger.

A start and a swerve, and down he came, while the rest of the herd rattled away over the stones. We rushed up in great spirits, only to find to our horror that 'he' was a miserable she—a big yeld doe whose thick velvet-covered horns had led me to take her for her betters. I can remember no moment of keener disappointment. We cleaned the beast, and between us carried her back to the farm. I had the loins and haunches, and as it took us five hours to make our way home, and most of that time we were going in the dark, we arrived at the farm somewhere about midnight, quite tired out.

And then Mrs. Iver proceeded to congratulate me on the day's sport!

The Norwegians were one and all unable to understand our point of view, and with the limited Norwegian then at our command it was almost impossible for us to explain. At last the attempt was made by Geoffrey somewhat as follows: 'Se her, we shoot ikke *simle*; we shoot for store horns; det er just a hundred kroner gone to Gammel Erik.' This masterly appeal to the pocket was greeted with shouts of derisive laughter, but it had its effect, and my bad example was not allowed to stand as a precedent.

And now I propose to pass over a week's hunting, during which time I twice saw and missed a good stag. Such things must happen, but they are not pleasant either to read of or to write about. One grain of consolation I contrived to extract from the assurance of my companions—that, to judge from his build and colour, he was probably a Lapp deer that had run wild,

and that if shot the Lapp herdsman's mark would in all likelihood have been found in his ear.

The Lapp deer, according to the Norwegians, is a more heavily built beast than the true wild reindeer; generally, also, he is lighter in colour and blunter about the nose. These are the deer that stray from the herd in winter after a heavy fall of snow, while it is still too soft for the Lapp to follow on ski. In this way many are lost every winter. Once when elk-hunting in September I came upon a herd of between forty and fifty which must have escaped, for there was no Lapp with them, and in that district wild reindeer are unknown.

Followed a period when no deer were to be found. There was always plenty of sign, big cast horns showing white among the stones, tracks, beds two feet deep and more that the warmth of their bodies had melted in the snow; but in time the very abundance of these traces became a cause of depression. On such occasions it was reassuring to be out with Iver. We would ask him if he had ever seen deer in such and such a corrie. 'Over yonder by the snow patch,' he would say, 'I once killed three deer together. There is the hill I ran down on my ski right into the middle of a herd—missed them, too. From these stones I shot a big buck.' And so on.

At last one Saturday it fell to my lot to go out with Martinus and Peder. There was nothing at all remarkable about the early part of the day. At about 4.30 we had finished our breakfast and were ready to start for the hill. Then came the long walk through the wood to the head of the valley, after that the steep climb up from the *saeters* past the zone of brilliant autumn-tinted shrubs and grasses, till we reached the bare high fjeld itself. All that day we walked, and saw so little sign of deer that at last Peder and Martinus, keen as they were, suggested that we should go home.

In an inspired moment I suggested that for luck we should try one more corrie before we turned. We started forward again, the Norwegians stepping briskly from rock to rock, I following.

Suddenly I saw Peder drop, quickly followed by Martinus. Cautiously I crept up to them. At last! There they were, fifteen of them, lying in a little hollow some way in front. Two of them were bucks, one apparently a very fine one. I could see his great horns gleaming as he turned his head. We were lying upon the crest of a little steep-sided spur of hill which ran forward almost

into the valley which contained the deer. Once off this spur, we could advance to within range, under shelter of a friendly ridge, almost without stopping. But this plan, simple as it seemed, was fraught with one great difficulty. The hillside that we had to descend was simply a heap of stones, any one of which, if dislodged, would make noise enough to put off the deer. Step by step, with infinite care, we began our descent, and eventually, much to my relief, arrived at the bottom without mishap. Now, thought I, our troubles are at an end. Along the valley we crept, cautiously picking our way among the stones, and at last reached the friendly ridge which, as Peder gleefully asserted, was within fifty yards of the deer. Alas for our hopes! On looking over we found that the herd had risen and fed away, and the big buck was now more than two hundred yards distant, and with his haunch towards us. I decided to wait for a better chance.

We followed him as far as our ridge would allow, and several times I thought that he would come within range. It was plain that he did not relish the presence of the other stag, but it was also plain that he was afraid of him. Every now and again he would charge down upon him, snorting and grunting like a steam-engine. Had he succeeded in driving off the 'outlier,' I should almost certainly have had a shot as he pursued him; but, alas! the big fellow was a bit of a coward as well as a bully, and, seeing that his adversary did not give way, he somehow always sheered off before he came within striking distance.

Finally, the deer decided to make their way up and over a low hill opposite to us, on the other side of the valley into which we looked. Slowly they fed up the hillside. At last the first of the *simle* reached the crest of the hill, stood for a moment silhouetted black against the sky, and then passed leisurely out of sight. Another and another followed, till at length only the little stag remained far behind the others. If ever I hated an animal it was that young stag. He kept us there for fully ten minutes, and all the while the rest of the herd was feeding further away behind the ridges. At last the time came when we could only see his horns above the skyline, and then after what seemed an interminable time they also disappeared.

We jumped up and started down the stony hillside at the peril of our limbs. Noise in moderation did not matter now, as it was unlikely to carry on to the next corrie; but speed was of the first importance, for there was no knowing how soon one of the beasts

might feed back into sight. We raced across the narrow valley, and began making our way up the hillside opposite.

Just as we were nearing the summit, suddenly, out of the ground apparently, appeared the figure of the big stag not fifty yards away, only to disappear again before I could raise the rifle to my shoulder.

I felt sure that he had seen us, and made up my mind to a long running shot from the brow of the hill; but Peder was of a different opinion. 'He has not seen us yet,' he whispered; and so it proved, for in another moment back he came, pursuing that blessed youngster, a most splendid and unforgettable sight. With head held high and the white mane on his neck fairly bristling with anger he trotted slowly past, not seventy-five yards from where I stood. I raised my rifle, when—bang! a bullet from Martinus behind us whistled past Peder's head and—missed! The next moment I fired. 'You've hit him!' cried Peder. As I looked, the big beast gave a start, ran round in a little faltering circle, and then fell with a crash among the stones. Meanwhile the other stag which had doubled back had appeared again, and was trotting past.

Martinus and I fired almost together, and the deer reared straight up and fell back dead.

The two Norwegians thereupon disappeared to murder *simle*, and I believe got two, while I ran forward to rejoice over my good fortune. He was a very good beast of thirty-six points, far finer than the deer that I had missed. Of course, I was very angry with Martinus, but abuse through an interpreter is at the best unsatisfactory. He had never seen such a deer before; and as the *post-mortem* showed conclusively that the big deer, at any rate, had fallen to my rifle, I felt inclined to be lenient.

'I think,' said Peder to me severely, as he galloched the big stag, 'that if you had missed that deer I should have fought you.' In the same way, if Martinus's fusillade had had any effect upon the big buck, I think something serious would have happened. As it was, he got off remarkably cheaply with a reprimand. But his rifle did not appear any more upon the hill.

The light was waning when I photographed the two stags lying as they had fallen, and we had four deer to galloch. This is an operation that takes time, even when conducted after the primitive Norwegian fashion; and before we had them cleaned and hidden away under a cairn of stones to protect them from foxes and

gluttons, the darkness had set in in real earnest, and a weary stretch of country lay between us and home. We therefore decided to leave practically all the meat, and started off, the Norwegians each carrying one of the heads, while I brought up the rear with my rifle in my hand, Martinus's slung across my shoulder, and a piece of deer meat tied in a handkerchief to the back of my belt.

I shall not soon forget the discomforts of that long tramp home. If the going was difficult in the daytime, it was ten times worse at night. We plodded on, stumbling and falling among the stones in the darkness, and many times I had cause to bless the aforesaid piece of deer's meat, which did good service that night as a buffer between the rocks and myself. But it was hard falling all the same, and, moreover, each time I fell Martinus's rifle swung round and hit me across the head.

Presently we came to a narrow place where a steep slope fell away past a snowfield down to a lake which lay glimmering some two hundred feet below us. I must admit that I did not like the look of the place; the slope was steep, we could not see where to put our feet, and every stone we dislodged slid down over the snowfield, and fell with a plunge into the lake below. Eventually, however, we all three got past in safety, and soon after found ourselves on better ground. Here it was proposed that we should sleep for a little till the moon rose; so we lay down under the lee of a big rock, and rolled ourselves up in the skins. Peder took the little skin, and Martinus and I shared the larger one. This was an excellent arrangement, for the warmth of our two bodies kept us from getting cold, and I was soon asleep.

About half an hour later I woke up, feeling miserably chilled, to find that Martinus, perhaps unconsciously, had annexed my share of the skin. My feet, wet from fording a stream, were far too cold to admit of any chance of sleeping again, and, moreover, the moon had risen, so I woke up the others, and we continued on our way.

All that night we journeyed on, and at the first grey of dawn arrived at some deserted *sæter*, very much done up. Martinus fell on the bed and was asleep in a moment; but Peder, who was practically untiring, collected some wood from the stack outside, and between us we managed to stew some pieces of liver and heart in a great cauldron that was there, and with some salt that we found we got together quite a creditable meal. We did it full

justice, having had nothing to eat for thirteen hours, after which we disposed ourselves about the room, and soon were all asleep.

That was the end of our hunting. Geoffrey's bad luck pursued him throughout, and, I think, culminated in the following incident.

He had already avoided one native hunter that day, and, coming upon his best piece of ground, found yet another already in possession. After all, the hunter had a perfect right to be there, so he did the only thing possible—went up and began to exchange experiences. While this was going on, Peder, who was with him, suddenly said, 'I see a buck.' And sure enough there was a big beast standing in full view, looking at them. As there was no chance of getting any nearer, Geoffrey lay down and opened fire at three hundred yards. The beast never stirred. Then the native fired, and the beast turned and began to move away. Again Geoffrey fired, and this time down came the deer in a heap, shot through the head.

They rushed up, to find that it was only a very big yeld hind with the mane like a stag. All three shots had hit her. Over their feelings I prefer to draw a veil.

ALFRED C. GATHORNE-HARDY.

DEATHS OF THE MARSHALS.

PROBABLY no men who ever bore arms faced greater, or more frequently recurring, personal perils than the children of the French Republic, who, by the will of their old comrade Napoleon Bonaparte, were transformed into bulwarks of his Empire as Marshals of France. Whatever was the variety of their merit as scientific soldiers, whatever may have been their individual failings, unscrupulousness, jealousies and rapacity, there has never been any question that they were fighting men to the backbone, that their courage was at all times without stain, and that they had no faintest hesitation in placing themselves in extremity of danger whenever it was necessary to lead and show an example of resolution to the men under their command. If their master loaded them with wealth and honours, it was because he knew that they were above and beyond all other men in at least one priceless characteristic, which, in its most consummate form, is certainly a gift bestowed upon few.

A story is told of Marshal Lefebvre, Duke of Dantzic, which illustrates his own consciousness of the qualities that had made him what he was. He was vexed at the tone of envy and unkindness with which a companion of his childhood, who met him in his prosperity, spoke of his riches, titles and luxury, and said in reply, 'Well, now you shall have it all, but at the price which I have paid for it. We will go into the garden, and I will fire a musket at you sixty times, and then, if you are not killed, everything shall be yours.' Indeed, the trial which Lefebvre proposed to his friend was not in the least an exaggeration of the circumstances which every Marshal had passed through in his early days when he was a subaltern and was bringing himself to notice; circumstances, too, which might well again present themselves to him in any campaign, even after he had attained the highest rank. At Eylau, Augereau escaped death by a marvellous turn of fortune, for his corps, though it held its ground, was reduced from 15,000 to 3,000, all his staff were either killed or wounded, and he himself, wounded more than once, had his uniform rent with bullets. At Zurich Masséna was in the hottest part of the fight, keeping his hand upon

the pulse of the battle where it throbbed with greatest emphasis. Everyone knows of Marshal Ney's heroic conduct during the retreat from Moscow, how he took a musket in his hand and fought as the last man in the rearguard, saving, as was acknowledged, 40,000 lives. At Ratisbon, after the first and second attacks on the fortifications had failed with scathing loss, and to attempt the task again seemed to involve such certain destruction to the stormers that the men would not undertake it, Marshal Lannes cried, 'Come, I am going to show you that I was a grenadier before I became a Marshal, and that I am one still,' seized a scaling ladder and began to carry it to the breach, thereby stirring up a wave of enthusiasm which at once carried the French columns forward to a great success. Murat was ever the first, even after he became King of Naples, in the brilliant charges that he conducted, and it is told how he had the superlative audacity to ride alone far in front of his squadrons and to wave back the threatening clouds of Russian Cavalry, awing them into retirement by the astounding influence of his magnificent personality and dauntless mien. But instances of self-devotion on the part of the Marshals were so common that to recall them would be an almost endless employment. Every one of these men, during his career, did things which could only be accomplished by beings of iron nerve and determination, beings indeed who, as warriors, were rather to be regarded as demi-gods than as ordinary mortals. And this superabounding courage was absolutely necessary to a man if he was really to dominate the new type of national soldiery produced by the French Revolution and to evoke in its individuals the spirit that they showed so often and with such brilliant effect. The rank and file produced by the cry of 'la Patrie en danger,' and by the 'levée en masse,' differed essentially from the troops of other European nations, and perhaps particularly in this respect, that they showed the personally independent reasoning faculty in war. They would plunge into danger readily enough, when they thoroughly realised the necessity of doing so, but they had no idea of sacrificing themselves unless those who directed the operations shared fully in the risks of the work to be done. A story is somewhere told of a French officer, taken prisoner in the Peninsula, who said to his captors, 'With your men, you simply give the order "Form line, forward," and an attack is made at once. In our army, if we give such an order, we probably hear from the ranks, "Let the officers go first."'

In the days of the First Empire, the Marshals had little time for repose and the enjoyment of all the wealth and honours that had been so lavishly heaped upon them. No sooner was one campaign finished than they were almost at once despatched to take part in another, and in the later struggles, when the old and tried soldiers had been expended on battlefield after battlefield, in the snows of Russia and on the fever-stricken plains of Germany, the ranks of the army were filled with young and raw conscripts, and it was more than ever essential that the most notable leaders should themselves support and encourage the inexperienced officers and men by the exhibition of unexampled daring. At Lützen, Bautzen, Dresden, on the terrible field of Leipzig, in the marvellous campaign of 1814, it might almost be said that it was the Marshals who fought, and that the rank and file seconded their efforts, rather than that the men fought under the direction of these chiefs. If the Marshals had been absent, not all Napoleon's genius, not all the valour of soldiers fighting desperately against armed Europe, could have so long maintained the mighty efforts. And so to the bitter end—the abdication at Fontainebleau—where was finally dissolved 'the goodliest fellowship of famous knights whereof the world holds record.' Their monarch, indeed, returned, but only a few of the Paladins could be again gathered to his standard, and on the fatal field of Waterloo how were the services of the absent ones missed! As Napoleon said, '*Si mon pauvre Berthier avait été ici*;' if Murat had led the gallant squadrons which were expended in ill-conceived charges; if Oudinot had commanded the stately grenadiers; if Macdonald's tactical ability and stern determination had been available; if —

But to come to our immediate subject. How extraordinary it must seem to every student of their history what a small proportion of the twenty-three men created by Napoleon Marshals of France, who had in a long series of wars been ever where bullets were flying thickest and swords bit most deeply, fell victims to shot and steel! Two only were killed in battle, Lannes and Bessières; and indeed the death of Bessières can hardly be fairly so reckoned, for, when he was struck to death at Weissenfels, he was in a part of the field where he was not called by duty, and to which he had ridden out of pure curiosity to see how the day was going. A third, Prince Poniatowski, was drowned in the Elster during the retreat from Leipzig, but it was believed, with apparently good grounds that his death was really a suicide committed under the

discouragement caused by the failure of all his hopes for the re-establishment of an independent Poland. Fifteen Marshals died in their beds, most of them at a very advanced age, all in the enjoyment of every honour, one, indeed, as an independent monarch. The remaining five came to their end under tragic circumstances, but circumstances in no way connected with the hazards of war. They were Berthier, Brune, Mortier, Murat, and Ney. Some mystery is attached to the death of Berthier. The great chief of the Staff, of whom it was said that he drew up orders so clearly that the recipients could have no possible doubt or hesitation as to the manner of executing them, who was an instrument most perfectly adapted to Napoleon's needs, had accepted service under the Bourbons after the first restoration, and had been placed at the head of the Garde du Corps. When the Emperor returned from Elba, Berthier attempted to rejoin him, and he would have been received with open arms. 'Cette brute de Berthier,' said Napoleon, 'il reviendra. Je lui pardonne tout, mais à la condition qu'il mettra son habit de Garde du Corps pour paraître devant moi.' He was, however, at Bamberg, the property of his wife's uncle, the King of Bavaria, and when he tried to gain the French frontier he was turned back by the line of Allied troops. In great sadness he returned to Bamberg, and his mental trouble was so acute as apparently to bring on a serious fever with fits of delirium. On June 1, as a regiment of Russian Dragoons, on the march towards France, defiled past the château, Berthier was seen to fall from an upper window, and he was taken up dead with his skull fractured. It has been generally received, what was indeed probably the case, that, in a raving paroxysm, he either threw himself out of the window or accidentally fell from it, but there was also a vague report that he was assassinated and thrown into the street by a gang of masked men. No doubt, as the depository of many weighty secrets and connected with many matters which involved deeply the interests and even the personal safety of others at a very critical period, it might well have been to the advantage of highly placed personages that he should be removed from the scene.

Marshal Brune was one of the victims of 'La terreur Blanche,' and was murdered at Avignon on August 2, 1815, in circumstances of peculiar atrocity. A bloodthirsty crowd, calling itself Royalist, but really only animated by the lust of slaughter, frantically sought his death and penetrated to the room in a hotel to

which he had escaped. The Prefet and other Royalist authorities, weak and yielding to the butcherly mob with which they more than half sympathised, failed to protect him. He was shot by a ruffian called Guindon, a linendraper in the National Guard, his body was dragged by the heels through the town, amidst the yells of the populace, and cast into the Rhone.

Marshal Mortier, although he had returned to Napoleon's service during the Hundred Days, escaped all penalties after Waterloo, and eventually, when Louis Philippe came to the throne, became Minister of War. On July 28, 1835, he was accompanying the King and his sons at an inspection of the National Guard on the Boulevard du Temple, when Fieschi fired his infernal machine, which created as much devastation as an Anarchist bomb of our own times. The machine consisted of twenty-five barrels, loaded with various missiles, and discharged simultaneously by a train of gunpowder. The King and his sons were not injured, but upwards of forty persons were killed or wounded, and among those slain on the spot was Marshal Mortier. A melancholy end for an old and honoured warrior !

But for deep and pathetic interest, as examples of the calm courage with which really brave men are able to meet death, and to treat the great destroyer as a familiar opponent, whose close embrace they can receive without a shudder, there are no tales in history more impressive than those of the last hours spent on earth by the two most renowned Marshals, Murat and Ney. Whatever were the faults and shortcomings in the lives of the two men, they both, at least, when they came to die, encountered their fate with a dignity worthy of the places that they had filled during their marvellous careers.

After the battle of Leipzig, the history of Murat as a General of cavalry and a bulwark of his brother-in-law's throne came to an end. Appalled by the misfortunes which seemed to be crushing Napoleon he withdrew to Naples, and, more anxious to secure his throne than to recognise his obligations to the man who had seated him on it, he embarked on the lamentable negotiations with Austria and England which irremediably soiled his honour and could never have been reasonably expected to safeguard his position as a European sovereign. He even put his army in motion against that commanded by Prince Eugène, and though, probably intentionally, he acted with but little vigour against his old comrades and countrymen, Eugène was compelled to retire behind the

Mincio. After the abdication of Napoleon, the re-establishment of the Bourbon King at Naples was insisted on by Talleyrand. When he recognised that he was going to be given up by the Allied Powers, Murat yielded to the dictates of his own intrepid spirit and resolved to rouse Italy against his enemies. His Queen Caroline gave him the wise advice to remain for the time on the defensive, and to wait till circumstances developed themselves, but he was deaf to her counsels. He had, at first, some slight successes, but, the Austrians having been reinforced, he was compelled to fight a general action at Tolentino, in which he displayed all his old courage and determination. But he lacked artillery, his Italian troops fought half-heartedly, and he was defeated by greatly superior numbers commanded by General Neipperg, who afterwards married the ex-Empress Marie Louise. Abandoned by his Court and followers, he escaped to Naples, where he embraced for the last time his wife and children. Thence he made his way to Cannes and wrote to Napoleon, imploring to be taken again into his service. His brother-in-law might possibly have forgiven Murat's treachery to himself, but he knew that, after so lately fighting against France, the unfortunate man could not possibly again serve in the French army. The prayer for employment was coldly refused, and Murat was forbidden to approach Paris. The news of Waterloo followed, and the fury of the Royalist reaction in the South of France made it impossible to secure his personal safety. He fled to Corsica, and, while there, he was invited to trust himself to England. He was also offered an asylum in Austria if he would resign his kingship and call himself Comte de Lippona. He would, however, place confidence in neither country, and conceived the mad project of making a descent upon his old dominions with about two hundred followers gathered from among veterans of his army, and of trusting to the Neapolitan population, with whom he believed himself to be more popular than the weak and tyrannical Ferdinand. By the sale of his diamonds he collected sufficient funds to hire four small ships, in which he embarked his little expedition. In it there was certainly more than one traitor, for all its details were perfectly well known at Naples, and all preparations were made to meet it on disembarkation. So secure of the result was the Neapolitan Court that it was discussed how Murat should be treated when he was taken prisoner, and it is said, by at least one authority, that the representative of England, in opposition to the Ministers of Austria, Russia, and Prussia, who counselled milder measures, cut

the matter short by saying, 'Kill him. I will take all responsibility.'

Misfortune, however, had dogged Murat from the first. His little squadron ran into tempestuous weather and was quickly scattered. Two of the skippers took the opportunity of deserting his fortunes, carrying with them the soldiers whom they were conveying. One ship was driven on the Calabrian coast, far from the ill-fated leader, who was able to land on October 8 with only twenty-nine men. The little band marched on the nearest village, which it reached when the inhabitants were collected for Mass. Murat's companions raised the cry 'Vive Joachim'! but roused no sympathising response. A band of armed peasants, led by a Captain of Gendarmerie, attacked the weather-worn and miserable party, and the proud Marshal who had brilliantly ridden a conqueror in Egypt, Italy, Germany, Spain and Russia, whose voice had on so many battlefields been potent to let loose what General Foy picturesquely and forcibly called '*les ouragans de la cavalerie*,' was obliged to fly on foot, wearied and despairing, before a handful of contemptible and untrained militia. He sought to re-embark, but his ship had been driven seaward by the wind, and, after a captain and a sergeant had been killed by his side, he was forced to surrender at discretion and to suffer himself to be led a prisoner amid the contemptuous hooting of a vulgar crowd.

Kept in the closest confinement till the 13th, he was then tried by a military commission composed (an unworthy insult) altogether of subaltern officers. He indignantly declined to recognise its powers or to appear before it. 'They are no judges of mine,' he said, 'they are my subjects. This is a business, not of trial but of condemnation. The commission are not my judges but my executioners.' A few minutes later the sentence condemning him to death was pronounced, and he received it with haughty coolness, acknowledging indeed that it was only what he expected, and that his life could not have been safely spared. '*C'est juste ; entre nous, on ne doit pas se faire grâce. Si le roi Ferdinand était dans la même position, je ne la lui accorderais pas.*' He only asked for a few minutes' delay, in order that he might write a farewell to his Queen Caroline. At four o'clock he was led to the esplanade, where a firing party was drawn up. He refused to have his eyes bandaged, placed himself standing before the soldiers, and, pointing to his breast, said, '*Soldats, dirigez ici vos coups. Epargnez le visage, visez au cœur.*' He then himself

gave the order to fire. The volley parted. Clenched in the hand of the dead man was found the last object on which he had looked, a seal graven with the likeness of his Queen.

That Marshal Ney suffered the last penalty has always been, in some sort, a blot on the memory of the Duke of Wellington. While the trial of the great soldier was proceeding, Madame Ney was visiting all the representatives of the Allied Powers in France, and imploring them to intervene in her husband's behalf. Amongst others, she invoked the aid of the great Duke, reminding him of the formal amnesty which he had signed. But a cold answer was returned to her prayers. He said 'that he was not justified in interfering, because the King had never ratified the convention of July 3, and moreover that that amnesty had been granted on the part of the Great Powers towards all Frenchmen only as regarded their political conduct and opinions.' The Duke's statement was perfectly true according to the letter, but hardly so in fact. Nobody had imagined that, when the amnesty was granted, it did not bind the King, though it had not received his signature. If it had not been granted, it is very possible that resistance to the final return of the Bourbon dynasty would have been prolonged, the path of restoration would have been much impeded, and order would not have been at once restored to distracted France. In all honour, as a monarch, Louis XVIII. was bound to observe the amnesty minutely, and that he did not do so was owing to the advice given to him by men like Fouché and Talleyrand, themselves guilty of constant political tergiversation. Wellington's word was then all-powerful, and he might well have advocated mercy for one who, whatever his nominal treason to the Bourbons, in which he was no worse than many others, had always been a devoted soldier to France, and a generous and gallant enemy to France's foes.¹

Marshal Ney was tried before the Chamber of Peers. In the first instance it had been decreed that he should be tried by a court-martial, but, by the ill-conceived advice of his counsel, he had pleaded that no court-martial was competent to deal with him, because the title of Marshal of France did not signify a rank in the

¹ When Charles Napier was a prisoner in Ney's hands after Corunna, a message under a white flag was sent to inquire after his fate. Baron Clouet received the flag and hastened to inform Ney. 'Let him see his friends and tell them that he is well and well treated,' was the Marshal's response. Clouet looked earnestly, but moved not, and Ney, smiling, asked why he waited. 'He has an old mother, a widow, and blind.' 'Has he? Let him go, then, and tell her himself that he is alive!'

army alone, but also a dignity in the State. Unfortunately for him the plea was allowed. It was said afterwards by some of the officers detailed to serve on it that the court-martial would certainly have acquitted him. Jourdan was its president; Masséna, Augereau and Mortier were among its members; and they could never have doomed an old brother-in-arms. The trial, when it did come on, was carried out with indecent haste and even with the utmost disregard of due legal forms. In its course Ney had a last opportunity of showing his love for France and his pride in being a Frenchman. His advocate had urged in his defence that he could not legally be tried in France, because, by virtue of a recent treaty, the town in which he was born had been taken from the country. But Ney would have none of this. 'A loyal Frenchman he had always been, and a Frenchman he would die.'

The result was a foregone conclusion. Marshal Ney was found guilty, and was sentenced to be executed on the following morning. Some of the Peers forwarded a strong petition for the Royal mercy, but it is probable that it never reached the King, though, even if it had, it is very doubtful whether he would have given to it any favourable consideration unless some powerful influence had been brought to bear upon him and to overcome his personal desire for vengeance.

The unseemly haste and political bias which characterised Ney's trial were equalled in iniquity by the precipitancy with which execution followed sentence. It seemed as if personal rancour was playing a part in securing that no merciful influence could have time for action, no explosion of popular sentiment could make itself felt in averting the dread issue. No doubt such rancour really did exist in the minds of the King himself and of his prime adviser, Fouché; very probably also in that of Talleyrand; and they were all determined that, the Emperor having been consigned to a living grave at St. Helena, they would not allow the greatest and most formidable of his champions to slip from the clutch that held him as a victim.

Ney was confined in the Luxembourg Palace, and the Comte de Rochecouart, as Commandant de Place in Paris, was charged with his custody, receiving most minute instructions as to his security and complete isolation from the rest of the world. Three persons only were to be allowed admittance to him—his wife, his notary, and his confessor. Rochecouart was essentially a chivalrous gentleman, one of the old French noblesse, who, during Napoleon's

reign, had served in the Russian army and had gained a high reputation as a soldier for courage and ability. The duty of a jailer was to him in the highest degree distasteful and painful, and he carried it out with the utmost sympathy and consideration for the unfortunate prisoner, though, as a soldier, he took care that no precaution for his safe keeping was neglected.

When he entered Ney's room in order to read to him the letter containing the instructions as to the several persons with whom he was permitted to have interviews, he found him guarded by two grenadiers à cheval of the Royal Guard. After the letter was read, the Marshal said, 'I will first confer with my notary, then I will see my wife and children; as to a confessor, let them leave me at peace; I have no need of the priesthood.' At these last words one of the veteran grenadiers, standing at attention, said, 'You are wrong, Marshal,' and pointing to his arm, ornamented with several chevrons, 'I am not as illustrious as you, but I also am an old soldier. Well, never have I gone so boldly under fire as when I have first recommended my soul to God.' These few words, pronounced by the gigantic grenadier in an agitated and solemn tone, appeared to make a strong impression on the Marshal. He went up to the old soldier, and, patting him on the shoulder, said with emotion, 'Perhaps, mon brave, you are right; you give good counsel.' He then inquired, 'What priest can I summon?' and being told that the Luxembourg was in the parish of St. Sulpice, of which the curé, l'abbé de Pierre, was very highly thought of, said, 'Beg him to come to me. I will receive him after my wife.' The grenadier's advice had borne the desired fruit.

The notary remained with Marshal Ney only a few minutes. He had probably previously received all final instructions. Then came Madame Ney with her three children, the youngest, only an infant, being carried upstairs by Comte de Tamnay, Rochechouart's aide-de-camp. The poor child, little knowing the sadness of the occasion, and wondering at the military surroundings, played with de Tamnay's long moustache. The heartrending meeting lasted for more than an hour, and Ney himself was obliged to close the scene and send his wife away, promising to see her again on the following day. Alas! he well knew that his life would end before the sun was again high in the heavens. The curé followed, who also remained for an hour, promising to return before the fatal moment arrived. Rochechouart had had the good feeling to withdraw the

two sentries from the Marshal's room during the time sacred to his family and to God.

The night was now far advanced, and the Marshal, after the departure of the curé, threw himself without undressing on his bed, falling at once into a calm sleep, which lasted untroubled till the morning. Surely no man ever waited for death with greater calmness and composure.

Rochechouart had much anxiety in the selection of the officer who was to be charged with the execution of the sentence, for the proper performance of the duty required exceptional coolness and firmness. Finally he chose the chef de bataillon, Comte de Saint-Bias, an officer of high reputation, Piedmontese by birth, and he has recorded his satisfaction that he was able to avoid giving the terrible office to any Frenchman. For the firing party were detailed four sergeants, four corporals, and four privates, the seniors of each rank, of the veteran company on guard at the Luxembourg, and they were to deliver the fatal volley formed in two ranks.

Nine in the morning was named as the hour for the execution, early enough to secure that there would not be an undesirably large crowd on the ground, but yet sufficiently late to permit the presence of some spectators. At a quarter past eight in the morning the curé of St. Sulpice returned, and he was asked to tell Ney that his time was come. As soon as he appeared at the door the Marshal said, 'Ah! Monsieur le curé, I understand you; I am ready.' He knelt, received absolution, and then led the way downstairs, cool and unmoved, in strong contrast to the priest, who nervously trembled with the sorrow that he felt. As he issued from the door he saluted the officers on duty, who were greatly relieved to see him wearing civil dress without decorations, for, if he had been in uniform, it would have been necessary by law to degrade him before he was shot, by tearing off buttons, epaulettes, and decorations, and who could have been found to inflict this last insult upon 'le brave des braves'?

A common *voiture de place* had been drawn up at the gate to convey him to the place of death, and the priest stood aside to let the Marshal enter, but he said, smiling, 'Get in, Monsieur le curé. Soon I shall go before you.' Two officers of gendarmerie also entered the vehicle and it was at once surrounded by a strong escort. At a few hundred yards from the Luxembourg, in the Avenue de l'Observatoire, the cortège halted and the door of the *voiture de place* was opened. Ney, who had expected to be conveyed to Grenelle,

the usual place for military executions, said, 'What! have we arrived already?' He refused to kneel or to allow his eyes to be bandaged, and only asked the Comte de Saint-Bias to show him where to stand; then walked steadily to the spot, placed himself facing the firing party in a calm and dignified attitude without the least touch of bravado, and took off his hat. While the officer was taking up his position to give the signal, he took advantage of the slight delay to say, 'Frenchmen, I protest against my sentence. My honour——' But, as he placed his hand on his heart, his words were cut short. The fatal volley rang out, and he fell—stricken to death. A long roll of the drums and a cry of 'Vive le Roi!' from the surrounding troops closed the dismal ceremony.

An end so dignified, death encountered with such real, such unflinching, courage, failed not to make a profound impression on the spectators. Rochechouart tells how he turned to the Colonel of Gendarmerie standing at his side, who like himself deplored the death of the 'brave des braves,' and said: 'There, my friend, is a great lesson to teach us all how to die.'

The curtain fell upon the vast pageant of the Napoleonic era many long years ago, but the actors are, even in our day, constantly again called to show themselves upon the stage, in memoirs, histories, and military disquisitions. Their reappearance never fails to exercise a supreme fascination, and the rôles of none of them are more worthy of careful examination or awake more human interest than those of the twenty-three Marshals of France.

C. STEIN.

THE PURSUIT OF PERSPIRATION.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, that exemplar of Anglo-Saxon virtues whom nature and the 'Spectator' prompt us to admire and study, has formulated in what the newspapers call 'nervous Saxon phrase' the Anglo-Saxon gospel. 'Sweat and be saved'—such, I am told, was the presidential utterance. Whether he did say it does not greatly matter; the fact that he is believed to have done so proves that the doctrine generally accepted by Britons is now being preached to their lean cousins across the water.

Some blasphemers have been found to hint that the zealous observance of those athletic rites, by which the shining edifice of British character is built up and perfected, generates in the end a kind of morbid craving to perspire. Certainly the gentleman who has been used to play cricket, football, and the rest, does desire greatly the physical concomitant of violent exertion; and if he has sweated freely, will always tell you so with emphasis and enthusiasm. What is more, he will, like President Roosevelt, preach at you the duty of perspiring with that air of superior manly virtue which used to belong to the apostle of cold baths. And yet it is plain that the man who can go pleasantly about his business, without taking thought how he shall get hot, is superior to—or, as the cant goes, more efficient than—his neighbour who needs elaborate pains to keep him healthy. Men have not generally the moral courage for this line of argument, but I heard the case put with great precision by a witty lady. Since the sex took to athletics, they have, it seems, preached 'physical culture' to one another with all the insistence of recent propagandists. But, as my friend said, 'Why skip in your back garden or play hockey in Battersea Park if a quarter of an hour's gentle walking will do all that you require?'

There, however, is the rub. Suppose it will not—suppose even an hour and a quarter, and hard going, will not produce the necessary rise of temperature, will not loosen recalcitrant tissues—what then? Then undoubtedly there will be trouble. A candid doctor once told me that the book of Genesis is quite right. Fallen man has a constitution arranged on the assumption that he will sweat

daily ; if the assumption be not fulfilled, if the Biblical injunction be neglected, the constitution will go wrong in ways which are familiar to most brain workers. The usage of the highest circles encourages frank statement of all medical details ; and I am sorry that I was never educated up to it, for it would add greatly to the interest and value of this article, which is written by a quondam Londoner for the advantage of those who still are confronted with problems which vexed me in the past. I also have pursued after perspiration, have paid for the privilege to perspire.

Continental races seem to have the advantage of us islanders in this matter. The Frenchman, as observation demonstrates, perspires without effort ; temperament suffices him. Germans are even more admirably porous, and your student or professor, sitting tranquilly beside his beer, can drip like the labourer in a hayfield—a result which for us, barring exceptional conditions of weather, can only be attained through elaborate machinery, generally disguised as a game.

For, oddly enough, what the book of Genesis mentions as the badge of punishment has become for the middle-class Briton a recognised attendant upon play. Your professional man earns his bread only metaphorically in the sweat of his brow—or if the phrase has any corporal application, it is only as the consequence of wearing a hard hat, which is certainly the least agreeable manner of producing perspiration. But nobody can make his brow sweat by working what is behind it, and the towel bound round the pale student's head in the small hours of morning (of which we read in Kingsley and other emotional writers) does not serve the office of a mop. I have never ascertained by observation or experiment what object it did accomplish, though it may have had (if it ever indeed had any concrete existence) some relation to the practice of a theorist known to me who worked with his feet on the hob and a tea cosy on his head, to maintain the equable flow of circulation. As a general observation from my own experience, hard reading or writing contracts the skin ; the question is how to relax it.

Games of course, for those who like them, are the pleasantest way. I shall never forget the avidity with which a group of us crowded weekly (the day of the week does not matter) to the house of a friend, who, lucky man, possessed a fives court—nor the indecent frankness with which most of us avowed our ulterior object. We came there—I must fall back on President Roosevelt's phrase—to sweat and be saved—to be saved from the consequences

of our own virtues, industry, frugality, and all the qualities of the good apprentice. It is the hard-working professional man who needs this particular form of salvation ; and the objection to salvation by games is that they cost too much in time and in money. A man is inclined to pursue the amusement beyond what is necessary for the cure ; he may waste time, he may even fatigue himself. Moreover, games generally involve getting together players, and making arrangements beforehand ; the means to perspire ought to be (from our present point of view) always and easily accessible. A fencing school is perhaps the best adapted to these conditions, but it costs money (if I may be forgiven the indelicacy of alluding to the fact that all men have not the same income), and for one reason or another fencing has not become generally popular in these countries. There remains the desperate expedient of a gymnasium, and it should make any heart bleed to think how many deserving persons have submitted voluntarily to the penal conditions which Mr. Sandow and his myrmidons administer. They beat the air with heavy dumb-bells (or light ones, which is even more tedious), they skip—at their age!—they expend valuable footpounds of labour in exertion which produces nothing (save perspiration), just as they might upon the treadmill. I had rather break stones, and see some result of my labour ; I had rather develop my muscles and make myself perspire by doing anything, than do something simply and solely to sweat and develop my muscles.

Yet, after all, what is there left ? Walking takes too long, and in cold weather will not do what we are asking of it. Bicycling, when a man has really learnt the knack, is just as bad ; you cannot heat yourself on the machine without riding at racing speed. Your active man could get all the exercise he wants in a quarter of an hour by running, but he cannot run in London—except before breakfast, when any form of eccentricity seems to be counted justifiable. When we rule out running, we exclude the simplest and most natural way of producing a perspiration, and probably of maintaining a sound physical condition generally ; but ruled out it certainly is. The man who makes a habit of walking five miles an hour in public roads is counted sane ; if he ran half a mile daily he would be a lunatic—for he could not always pretend to be catching a train. Of course you can be a lunatic in London without attracting any particular notice, but no one desires to be. In a rational world the hardy professional man would trot a few hundred yards in the park on his way to business or from it and would find

himself vastly the better for so doing. But there is no use in discussing what is merely rational: let us consider something less irrational than the gymnasium.

If the seeker after salvation lives in a suburb and has a plot of ground available, salvation is easy. He can dig. I wonder that the doctors have never discovered digging. It is on the whole the best of all exercises, the one which exercises most of the body's principal muscles; and I am quite sure that any enterprising specialist would find on examination that the soil turned up has a medicinal quality in its exhalations. Carrying this line of thought a little further, he would prescribe digging cures—one case should go to the clay in Essex, another to spade over the light loam in Surrey. Fossotherapeutic establishments (doctors generally like to show a knowledge of both the classical languages in constructing compound words)—fossotherapeutic establishments, I repeat, would spring up at suitable centres where genteel diggers would be furnished with bathrooms, with manicure precautions against injury to the hands, and all the host of subsidiary appliances. One could guarantee cures with a light heart from the exercise and the regimen. Moreover, digging has an educational value; no one after a few experiences of spade labour, prolonged, say, for a couple of hours, will be quite so pat with denunciations of the idle working man who thinks half-a-crown little enough for eight hours' digging.

But in London or any other big town, digging is out of the question. Of course, a plot of ground might be procured (the unemployed might be employed to grab it) and people allowed to come in and dig it over indefinitely; a roller, if necessary, being put daily over certain parts to meet the taste of those who liked harder digging. Yet this would be very little better than the dumb-bell business. If we are going to exert ourselves, let us have something to show for our exertion.

There remains an alternative which I must candidly avow was suggested to me by a philanthropic experiment. Reading in the papers about a gentleman who offered the unemployed sixpence an hour to chop wood, I used frequently to think of presenting myself to Mr. Carlile for this employment—and probably hundreds of other men have made the same reflection. What precisely was meant by wood-chopping I do not know. Splitting wood small for firelights is disagreeable work. On the other hand, splitting logs for fuel is just about the pleasantest exercise any man could put his hand to. We all remember enough about Mr. Gladstone

to know what can be said for the axe, and although felling trees is more glorious and more amusing than log-chopping, one may be well content with the second best.

There is undoubtedly a charm about swinging an axe which the spade can never offer; one stroke differs from another, there are continual small calculations to be made as to the point at which the edge should fall—and continual failures to make it fall there. The blow that splits a heavy log clean down the middle has much of the pleasure there is in 'a clean drive'; and coping successfully with a knotty lump by a judicious application of wedges offers another range of satisfaction. There is very little monotony in the work, and it affords ample room for skill. One has to acquire an eye for timber and know how it will flake and split; a beginner spends most of his time in extricating his axe from where it has stuck ineffectually. To deal with a piece of timber cleanly and get it into logs of the required size with the least number of strokes is (to my mind) a more tempting problem than to whack a sitting ball over a certain distance of ground and put it into a buried jam-pot. At all events, the wood-chopping will heat you and exercise you thoroughly in half an hour; golf demands an afternoon and a train journey.

I offer, here, for the good of the race, a suggestion in which lie lucrative possibilities. The man who will take a woodshed and let out hatchets to amateurs in search of exercise may confer a public benefit and save a private fortune. There is first the question of advertisement, which would naturally take the form of a treatise on hygiene—blessed word! Any doctor could expound (with some, but not too much, anatomical detail) the conditions of a perfect exercise, and then explain how wood-chopping fulfilled them. This was done for cycling, and if a man could say that cycling is the ideal exercise, a similar assertion can be made of any form of physical activity. The example of Mr. Gladstone previously referred to would certainly not escape attention. But why dwell on the familiar methods of judicious publicity? It is more important to show how money could be made out of the enterprise. This would of course derive from two sources, the first being the hire of axes and generally the run of the place—permission to perspire on the premises, with bathroom facilities—the second, the sale of the wood chopped. It is probable that the former of these would be the more important. But special terms could be made for those who desired to provision their houses with fuel of their own manu-

facture, and I have visions of lean athletic men, in a warm glow of health, bringing home each of them a neat bundle of logs in his hansom. With what pleasure the woodchopper would observe his logs spit, and crackle, and flame on the trim hearth—how he would despise the coal-burners! What connoisseurship would develop itself in the virtues of each timber—a subject full of possibilities. These possibilities, of course, include the qualities of wood for splitting. Some would like clean-grained stuff, like ash, which cleaves so easily; others a more resisting material, such as elm. For fancy splitting or fancy fuel there would be special charges; and here we touch an extra source of profit. Generally, for the success of the venture one would depend on that instinct for perfection which induces the Englishman to double or quadruple the cost of whatever he plays with. An axe at present costs five shillings: once wood-chopping became a fine art, thirty shillings would be the lowest figure. And of course axes with spring-cane handles, special lead-weighted backs, and a famous maker's name upon them, could not last as the common ones of commerce do. The business of grinding axes would (here as elsewhere) be attended with considerable profit. Moreover, the exercise would naturally be varied with spells of cross-cut sawing, and there are few things more troublesome and therefore more rightly expensive than to keep a saw in fine cutting order.

It would be a fine point to consider how cheaply one could afford to do the thing without diminishing its attractiveness, and in any case it must offer the opportunity, if not the need, for spending a good deal of money. But for the average professional man, if there existed a place, handily situated, where by using saw and hatchet he could go and heat himself healthily in about a quarter of an hour, I believe that he would subscribe very cheerfully for the privilege. The details, however, are for other minds: I give the world the general conception, and trust to see in print, before many years have passed, one of those admirable publications which arise so naturally out of the growth of a great industry, such as golf. In the pages of 'The Complete Woodchopper' perhaps I may be recorded as a pioneer.

STEPHEN GWYNN.

A SARDINIAN STORY.

I SHALL never be able to forget the moonlight of that January night. Although we were in the heart of the winter we could not decide to sleep within the hut of reeds, so warm and springlike was the air; we had lit the fire outside on the grass to save ourselves from the mosquitoes, and we had gone to sleep with our feet to the flame.

But the moon had risen after midnight behind the distant ridge of the Gennargentu; a full moon and very limpid, owing to the recent rains, and, rising over the horizon, it had become so luminous that it forced me to open my eyes. All things must then have seemed so strange as to persuade me that I was not yet well awakened from a dream. In fact, I did not move, but remained there lying on my back.

All the dome of the sky had the brightness of a silver cup; the neighbouring marshes, through the reeds, were dazzling for the reflection: all the pastures round glistened here and there with dew. With the corner of my eyes I could guess at the strange white glow of the sheeps' backs, as they slept on huddled together, hard by. Also the shepherds were still sleeping, wound and cloaked in their great black coats, and they were the only dark thing. On all sides the frogs croaked in such number and with such vehemence as to render my dazed state more fantastic.

A loud bark called me back to the reality of things; the beautiful dog, yellow and hairy as a real lion, was tugging at the cord that tied it to the ground, springing forwards to greet the old shepherd who was coming towards us. He alone could touch it, to all others it was inexorably fierce. Yet its master did nothing to deserve such predilection; he even fed it scantily, saying, as all Sardinians do, that hungry dogs chase better: the principle was so well applied, that one day, during the hunt, it overcame a young wounded boar, and when we shortly reached the place we found nothing but the tusks and the tail.

The old man did not therefore answer his faithful guard's morning salute otherwise than by the whistle always used by Sardinians to quiet dogs and by the accompanying words 'There,

there, ugly beast !' He then went up to the flock that was beginning to graze, and drove it into the fold made by bundles of sticks. His voice sounded from the fold : ' Get up, Battista, Efsio, Peppino ! Get up, hurry ! the milking has to be done before the marriage.'

The three that were called raised themselves slowly from the ground, and their tall slim persons were discernible under the dark cloaks.

All the region round was waking meanwhile, with the first light of dawn. The moon had paled and drawn aside, whilst the morning mists spread on the plain and marshes in the eastern blush, till it seemed that air, water, and fire, all round, had again melted into one another as in the infancy of the universe. Then the mists began to vanish, the strong golden sun triumphed over all things ; dark cloaked figures of shepherds began to move round the huts that were spread all over that long strip of earth, and the smoke of a few fires rose on the horizon ; a few human voices reached me, lost among the great chorus of lambs, bleating in thousands, as though calling, and among the song of the larks greeting the day's resurrection. The domes of Oristano glittered in the distance.

The old man's voice sounded playfully : ' Come, tell us, shall we make continental cheese ? ' And he showed the cork pail, full of frothy milk. This was one of his favourite jokes, because he knew that I invariably answered : ' No, no, better do it in the Sardinian way.' Those shepherds of Sorgono used to come down with their flocks from their hills to winter in that plain by Oristano ; they had been among the first friends I had made on landing in Sardinia, five years before. Then I was full of plans for the *civilisation* of the island. I believed that it was necessary for the happiness of its people to redeem the land, transform agriculture, spread school teaching and general culture by all possible means ; encourage commerce and industries ; people it with continental settlers and emigrants that should help to make all its resources give their utmost.

The good old man would listen to me mildly ; he did not show himself astonished or dismayed, and used to say :

' It is well : we have heard these things said for a long while, and we are pleased that you continentals should try them : honest continentals though, not the kind that come here to shear our forests by fraud and to make themselves rich constructing useless railways.'

But when I wanted to persuade him to introduce modern

improvements in his pasturage, to better the breed of his animals, and to make the cheese rationally by machines, he always excused himself saying,

‘No, no, do these things yourselves, we are a breed of hard heads, new things will not go into them, we shall always go on this way.’

This obstinacy had made me thoughtful, for it was not only the old men that felt thus, nor were they people that had lived apart from all contact with things civilised. It was the young men too, who after two or three years of military service in the large and populous cities of the mainland, where they did not fail to observe and understand all they saw very shrewdly, on coming home again did not hesitate to don their old costume and to resume their traditional habits. It did not seem to me that I could judge them as a sluggish people and incapable of assimilating civilisation: I seemed to see instead that they meant wilfully to place a barrier between themselves and a civilisation the results of which they did not ignore. I then began to want to know their intimate way of feeling, and I lived for long months with them till they could look on me no longer as a stranger but as a companion. The more deep and attractive I felt their pastoral clan-life to be, the more I felt myself called to it by a voice of distant ages, and the less did I feel safe to speak of change and civilisation. I saw these to be inevitable sooner or later, but they no longer appeared so full of good that I must wish them near.

The old man read truly in my heart when he playfully reminded me of the agricultural machines that were rusting in the Oristano warehouse.

The sun was high already when the steaming ricotta was served on the wooden bench; we swallowed a few mouthfuls in a hurry and sprang on horseback in order not to be late for the wedding. The old man, who was to remain in the fold to mind the sheep, saluted our departure, waving his arm and crying:

‘Good wishes to *Compare* Anton Maria!’

Anton Maria, son of Daniele, shepherd from Sorgono, was that day to marry a girl of the Campidano plain. Anton Maria was *compare* to me since I had been godfather for confirmation to a little brother of his; therefore we were bound together, besides friendship, by the special bond of *comparatico* so strong in Sardinia. He was a boy of few words and of mild nature, for all his mountain origin. Three years since he had begun to love that vine-dresser’s daughter, with an obdurate fervid Sardinian love, of the kind that

may consume but never leaves the soul round which it has entwined itself. The girl was small and gay, fond of amusement, and she always wanted to have the prettiest yellow silk kerchief; she would smile at him often when he gazed at her apart as she danced the 'round dance' with the people of her village; and she had spoken to him sometimes as she went to the well with a pitcher to fetch water. They had decided to marry although old Daniele were never to give his consent:

'Bad country and bad people,' he used to say; 'I don't like this connection: the women here are very different from our women; they are vain and pretentious, my son will have troubles.'

Seeing that Anton Maria was not to be moved, he had given him half of his little flock and had gone back to Sorgono indignantly not to be present at the marriage.

As we trotted toward the village our ride led us by the marshes and we saw the *fassoni* rafts made of reeds, land, charged with the night's booty: the women, with their white and black costume and half-veiled faces, passed carrying either large baskets full of greens or pitchers of water on their heads; the men, with their great fur cloaks and their legs naked to the knees, raised the tips of their long caps to salute us. My companions would sometimes throw sharp sallies to them from their mounts.

The mountaineers do not hide a certain disdain for these people of the plain or Campidanese; small, shaved, and corpulent people who console themselves for the dampness of their ponds and marshes by abundant libations of vernaccia, the blond bitterish wine whereof they have the secret; and prefer comfortable travelling on the bench of a waggon to the back of a horse, who avoid quarrels and fights, and are not always true to their pledged word. Their spirit is gay and festive, but fragile and soft as the tiny houses they build on the bank of their ponds.

The village that was the goal of our ride appeared at a turning of the national road; the green, mossy roofs of its minute constructions moulded in mud did not rise above the tops of the reeds that grew in the marsh hard by. As we came up to it we were met by a small barouche driven by a fat man with a squinting look; we none of us answered willingly to his obsequious salute: his profession was an ungrateful one, but he had put much ferocity and special cruelty into it himself. He felt himself surrounded by the general odium, and he revenged himself by vexing everyone without pity.

Efsio smiled ambiguously.

'In our country that man would not be allowed to get so bad.'

The fat pig whose business it was to keep the village clean had come to greet us with many grunts as we entered: dogs and children rushed out of the nearest houses clattering round us.

'Welcome, welcome!'

It was Anton Maria, waiting for us with his bride's three brothers, at the door of his house. We jumped from our horses, tied them to the wall of the small courtyard, and sat round to drink vernaccia. We were assembled in the best room, the guest's room. In it were displayed a handsome painted bed, a chest of carved wood, and two ugly portraits of the King and Queen on the wall.

'Compare, we have changed our dress, I see?'

Anton Maria assented reddening. According to the local custom of the bride's region, he had doffed the high green velvet waistcoat of the Sargonese, to put on the black coat and loose white trousers of the Campidano.

Soon after the vicar came, large and jovial, and so engrossed was he between his little glasses of vernaccia and his hunting tales, that he would have forgotten the hour of the ceremony had not the sacristan entered, solemn in his red robe, to say it was getting late. Then we started out in a procession to fetch the bride from her house as the custom was: the women came to their doors as we passed, to throw handfuls of wheat over us as a promise of abundance.

The bride was not at the door to wait for us as we expected, but her mother came out and whispered to Anton Maria. He seemed astonished, turned towards us to excuse himself, and went in. The mother stayed with us, insistently explaining: 'It is nothing; Maddalena has had a little toothache this morning, that is why she is still in her room; but she will come directly.'

The father had also come out smiling to shake hands. He seemed that day to have shaken off the sadness which had filled him so long since his eldest son had died; and he had allowed the house to be cleaned and tidied, and a barber to come to shave him; for in his great sorrow he had neglected all things.

The young couple were keeping us waiting, and Don Celestino, the jolly vicar, allowed himself a few mischievous comments, spreading the contagion of his broad laugh over the whole company. But no one laughed when the bridal pair at last appeared: Maddalena was as pale as a corpse, her eyes were red and her little figure

drooped dejectedly, in strange contrast with her beautiful new gala dress. Anton Maria's hands were trembling, his face seemed strange and drawn in the effort to contain himself. I had never seen him thus. 'What is the matter?' 'Nothing, nothing, *compare,*' he answered in a voice slightly changed but incredibly calm; 'Maddalena was suddenly taken by violent pain in her ear; I had to bandage it, you see.' And lifting the yellow silk kerchief, he showed us in fact the linen bandage.

'I was rather upset because I feared it might be unlucky. Let us go, your reverence, it is nothing.'

This explanation neither convinced me nor anyone else: it was not possible that Anton Maria should be so overcome by a passing hurt: but everyone looked as though they accepted it. Sardinians always take good care not to complicate situations that they think mysterious by inopportune questioning; everyone has the right to give the public the explanation he likes best of his own affairs; others are free, if they have any interest in doing so, to inquire into the matter on their own account. As we walked in procession toward the church we heard people murmuring: 'They begin early to quarrel, these two! Anton Maria must have discovered something he didn't like at the last moment.' Meanwhile the grains of wheat rained down on us with the wishes: 'Many years! many years!' 'God will it.'

During the nuptial blessing, whilst the old sacristan was singing with all the strength of his great trembling voice, little Maddalena did not cease from crying silently, whilst Anton Maria looked fixedly before him at the altar, and seemed forgetful of his part in the rite.

At first a cloud hung over the wedding feast, although soup, fish, lamb done in four different ways, roast goat's flesh, sucking pigs, boiled chickens, all kept appearing on the table, and the series gave no sign of stopping. Don Celestino helped the old host to pour out the wine and made all possible efforts to animate the scene. At last an ancient fife-player came to the door, nicknamed Old Perpetual; in fact, I remember having always seen him with his cheeks swelled like a Triton, on his three-piped instrument: he never stopped either to speak or drink; and he went round from one village to another for ever whistling. Those notes acted like magic, and a great excitement sprang up in one and all: they made a ring round the piper and the best singer led the Sardinian couplet in a shrill high-pitched tone. This sing-song

they have received unaltered in all its strange modulations from the primitive inhabitants of the island. The chorus gave the answer, and as they went on the rhythm grew more and more hurried: the song grew gayer and gayer and the pauses were marked now and then by little guttural cries; then all stamped the ground, beating the time ever quicker with their feet also, till they fell to dancing. The repressed gaiety was asserting itself, always though with decency and dignity: the couples moved from the circle, advancing and backing in little measured steps, side by side and arm in arm. Maddalena's old father, too, was dancing with his wife and smiling good-naturedly with tears in his eyes: he was pleased when the others laughed at him for being so fat.

Anton Maria was standing apart talking to the other Sorgonesi, for the dance and the song of the mountains are different from those of the Campidano: they cannot harmonise. He seemed calm and quieted if not gay, and he followed his Maddalena affectionately as she enjoyed the dance blithely on her brother's arm. I noticed that he often looked at his watch; he spoke also with special interest of my horse Ali.

'Does he mind the spur much or does he want the whip? Is he hard in the mouth? How many miles will he hold at a gallop?'

'It is useless you should beat about the bush so, dear *compare*,' I answered; 'if you hope that I will let you ride him, you are mistaken: you Sardinians have taught me a good proverb—horse, gun, and wife are never to be lent——'

'It is well, *compare*; I will not ask for him.' Shortly afterwards he mentioned that he was going to buy a cigar. I thought of saying I would go with him, but he was too quick for me, and I went back to the dance.

A few minutes later we heard two shots go off, one after the other, so close to us that the little glass windows of the room, in which the dancing was, shook with it. I don't know why, but I felt my heart jump into my mouth. The dance had stopped suddenly. Don Celestino got up from the stool where he was smoking his pipe, and he asked, looking round:

'Well, what is this? it can't be after the birds; the shots come from the *piazza*.'

The piper took the pipes from his mouth for the first time and his cheeks fell.

At this moment a boy appeared at the door panting and out of breath, crying :

‘Hurry, hurry, they have killed Signor Ambrogino !’

I don’t well remember what followed : I have the impression of hearing a general yell, and of a rush towards the door. We covered the ground at a run and reached the piazza just as two villagers were carrying a man, his head bleeding and without any sign of life, towards the Municipality. I recognised the tax-collector, the same that we had met on the morning before entering the village.

‘And where is Anton Maria ?’

I was sure by now what the answer would be.

‘He has escaped ! it was he that shot ! They saw him disappear down there, by that path, behind the olives at full speed !’

‘Yes, yes, galloping that way, and he was riding the gentleman’s horse !’

‘My horse, Ali !’ I ran to the house of the bride’s brothers. Ali was there no longer . . . but there was a note on the table of the hall, addressed to me—in Anton Maria’s handwriting ; it ran thus :

‘Dear *compare*, think no harm if I have taken Ali away, I will send him back soon ; I did so to be quicker.’ Meanwhile Maddalena, the bride, had arrived with the other women, shrieking and weeping : ‘My heart had told me that he would do it ! my heart had told me !’

She seemed to know something, so we stood round her to make her speak.

Signor Ambrogino, the tax-collector, had surprised her in the house that morning early, when all were out getting things for the feast.

‘Signor Ambrogino, if you come any nearer, I shall call,’ she had said, thinking he was going to importune her with his usual proposals. But that day he was otherwise minded : he showed her an official paper, saying : ‘Don’t be afraid, my pretty *picciocca*, I have only come for money. To-day before the feast you shall pay me.’

It was about a tax imposed on old Daniele’s fold, and one that he had always refused to pay.

‘Now that half the sheep are yours you shall pay me.’

Anton Maria had been even more obstinate than the old man : he thought the tax unfair and to avoid a seizure had hidden the sheep by the help of his friends in the mountains. The girl had

heard him say 'I had rather cut all my sheep's throats and leave them to the ravens than give one cent to that harpy,' and so she defended herself, saying she knew nothing and that he should apply to Anton Maria.

But Ambrogino knew better.

'That mountaineer has a hard head, he will answer with bad words: you are his wife since yesterday before the mayor and you must give me the money.'

'I have no money, you know it.'

'Then let us arrange it between ourselves.'

She saw in his eyes that he meant to propose the usual compact, to which he had made so many poor women submit under threat of seizure: at this she hit his ugly face with the back of her hand. He howled with rage.

'Pay me at once, then! Do your duty!'

'I have no money.'

'I'll manage to find it on you.'

He snatched then at one of the gold earrings that the bridegroom had had sent from Cagliari for a present, and as he couldn't undo it, he pulled it away, tearing a bit of the ear. As she told us this she drew back the blood-stained bandage, to show us the wound.

When Anton Maria had learned how she had been treated in the morning before going to church, he had not said many words: 'I will get your earring back later; don't worry about it.' But her heart had told her, she said sobbing, 'that it would end so.'

The doctor appeared at the door of the Municipality and we asked for news: 'He died at once: four balls all in the head, two balls were fired from each barrel, the charge for boars.'

'Well done! It serves him right!' they all cried. 'But why did he run away?' I tried to make it clear. 'He should have given himself up at once,' but they insisted: 'No, no, justice would always have been against him; Ambrogino belongs to the government.' 'Not a bit of it, he must give himself up: we'll find him a good lawyer; there has been very great provocation, the jury will absolve him. Efisio, Battista, Peppino, believe my word, in the name of God, take your horses, follow him, and bring him back!'

They allowed themselves to be persuaded and went off at a gallop, each in a different direction.

The evening was beginning to fall, groups of people stayed

on talking in the *piazza*, in the bride's house the women, huddled in a corner with veiled faces, sobbed silently; the old man had returned to his deep sadness after enjoying a few thoughtless hours; a smoky lantern threw a little light on the remnants of the feast. 'If only they bring him back!' I thought, and I sat myself down by the fire. Our breathing alone could be heard in the deepening shadow; no noise of horses from the country.

Later, though, the magistrate arrived in a dog-cart with the registrar and soon after he was followed by six carabinieri on horseback; two remained by the body, the others, having ascertained that the murderer was contumacious, went off again to scour the country, while the magistrate began his inquiries.

Peppino and Efsio returned towards midnight without having attained any result; they had lost the last traces up among the lentisk in the hills. We still placed our dying hopes in Battista, who was late. We went out on the road to the end of the village to hear better. After two hours of waiting a noise of horses' hoofs reached us: 'It must be he!' Peppino went forward in the darkness: 'There are two horses!' A mare was grazing with her foal in a field close by; she neighed, and a gay and vigorous answer sounded in the distance. 'It is Ali, it is Ali,' I cried. 'I know him for a certainty. I recognise him without a doubt. May God be praised!'

Our hearts danced with joy. Peppino sounded the whistle and cried: '*Compare* Antonio Maria!' The voice of Battista answered: 'It is I,' and he joined us in a moment, he led Ali behind him by the halter, but the saddle was empty. He told us how he had found him grazing by the river. Anton Maria had evidently let him go when he needed him no more. And we had no trace of the fugitive.

Ali, his coat rough with the dried sweat, his sides marked by the spurs, seemed otherwise altogether undisturbed by the whole adventure.

Anton Maria did not return. Only one who has lived long in the savage Sardinian solitudes can understand the sense of complete liberty and rebellion against all ties that they inspire. The mild youth that I had always known, after he had accomplished his bloody act of vengeance, refused to undergo the judgment of men: 'It is an account to be drawn between me, him, and God.' With the gunshot he had placed himself beyond the law and thus he wished to remain. No land could be more favourable to this

anarchy than that solitude of desert plains, of inaccessible cliffs, of forests untrod by man.

After some time his situation had grown worse. It seems that one night, when he had taken refuge in a shepherd's hut, he had let himself go and told his story: the shepherd, attracted perhaps by the hope of a reward, had taken advantage of his sleep to run and denounce him; he had woke up just in time to save himself. Three days later, however, the accuser was found shot dead. After this, the search for him growing more intense, Anton Maria joined a band of other ten outlaws for safety: in a scuffle with the carabinieri he killed a private and wounded a sergeant.

About a year after the tragic wedding I was called to Oristano by a special commissary sent from Rome to organise a general repression of outlaws in all the island. He spoke to me in a benevolent and paternal tone of my old friendship for the Sorgono bandit: 'Certainly, fine characters are to be found among those people. But what are we to do? Society cannot tolerate these sanguinary exceptions in her bosom. The safety of the peaceful citizen must be protected. Certainly we will not ask you to help us in an operation for capturing that devil of a Sargonese. . . . ' 'You are right there!' I interrupted. 'But you might, for instance, make him understand that it would be for his good were he to give himself up. The government has decided on an energetic and definite line of action, and we should try as far as possible to avoid the spilling of blood. If he were to give himself up at once, and, considering the nature of his crime, the punishment would not perhaps be very heavy . . . '

I understood what he wanted. The stratagem had often succeeded. The bandits were made to hope for a mild punishment, and when they were in the hands of justice they were condemned to the heaviest. All means may be used to unroot the evil growth. But that was my last conversation with the government commissary.

Two more months passed by. The conflicts in the hills between soldiers and bandits followed thick on one another. Each time I expected to read the name of my friend among the dead.

One day at the feast of the patron of Cabras, the fishermen's town, a man from Sorgono that I knew by sight came up to me, drew me aside mysteriously, and slipped a note into my hand. I recognised Anton Maria's handwriting at once and I read: 'Dear

compare, I have urgent need to see you, come at once to the *nuraghe*

of the Three Fountains. I shall wait for you there to-morrow morning.'

I only waited to feed my horse, and started at once. I remembered that the *nuraghe* was ten hours off, because it had once been the meet of a boar-hunt. I went alone, and kept looking around to make sure I was not followed. When those I met asked me where I was going, as the Sardinian custom is, I pointed in another direction. On the way, I heard tell how many people belonging to the bandits' families had been arrested, even women. I did not ask for particulars lest I should create suspicion.

But soon I passed the region inhabited of men. The swamps, the rushes, and the reedy fens ceased; the stony hills covered with lentisk began: troops of hares, very much surprised at the unusual nightly visit, disbanded hurriedly, and their ears whitened in the moonlight, among the dark green of the shrubs. After some hours I came to a still more savage region; there were rocks and wild olives, here and there some queer twisted cork-tree. A band of black goats suddenly awakened, and took to flight along the cliffs. Ali was startled, and he shied across a large flat rock that still retained the heat of the sun's rays, making it jet out myriads of fantastic sparks.

The first light of dawn shone on the roundness of the *nuraghe*, at three shots' distance. I tried sounding the old whistle and had my answer: Antonio Maria was there waiting for me. My emotion at that moment was so strong that I did not even notice two figures lying in wait behind a tree, with their guns levelled against me.

Ali shied to one side, and I, suspecting some ambush, felt quickly for my revolver. But I heard a known voice call me: '*Compare*, do not fear, come forward.' The guns' barrels turned from me as I moved, and they turned towards the part whence I had come, lest someone should have followed me. From the opening of the *nuraghe* Anton Maria came forward towards me with his hands held out. Had I met him by chance I certainly would not have recognised him; a shaggy black beard changed the whole expression of his face. His hair also had grown almost to his shoulders; his figure was broader and a little bowed; his clothes, mended with bits of leather here and there, bore the traces of wild weather and adventures; his eyes, once so mild and calm, stirred with a rapid nervous movement. We shook hands in silence, then he caressed

Ali, and held my stirrup while I got down, as he used to do when I went to see him in the fold, down in the Campidano.

Suddenly his face darkened. 'You know the news? They have imprisoned Maddalena and my father in Sorgono; they say that they communicate with me, and that they must oblige me to give myself up. I have had nothing more to do with them. I ask you to see that no harm comes to them, and that they be quickly placed at liberty, for no fault is theirs. This is why I had you called.

'Ah! also for another thing. I have known that the King is coming to Sardinia and that for this they want to destroy all the bandits first. But we wish the King no harm. Far from it, we have written him a letter, together with many other comrades; could you see that he gets it? Read it if you like.'

I opened the letter that was addressed in large characters to 'His Majesty the King of Italy.' In it he was told by that band of outlaws that they would willingly give themselves up directly to him, and would accept any punishment he should like to assign them, so that they should not have to pass through the procedures of law-courts.

Poor people! Their simple and childish fancy brought them back to a king that distributed justice to his people under the tree of the market-place. I did not want to undeceive him and I took the letter. I promised also to interest myself at once on behalf of the two prisoners.

He shook his head sadly: '*Compare*, tell me, you that know all my story, you do not think me such a bad man?' 'I think you a fool!' I answered. 'Why did you not give yourself up at once? Then you would have certainly been absolved: I had you searched for everywhere!' 'No, no; once in, they would have found a way to keep me there anyhow; destiny would have it thus! I am sorry for her, *povera picciocca*. . . .' We remained for some time in silence, a great affliction oppressed us both. Then he asked me suddenly and without curiosity, 'What sentence would I have now?' 'I will not deceive you, as they have deceived others; you would have a life sentence now.' 'I knew it,' he answered, and then he changed his manner: '*Compare*, you will be hungry after this long road.' And he drew from his wallet bread and a slice of old cheese. 'We must content ourselves,' he said smiling sadly, 'it is no longer the beautiful ricotta that we used to eat of a morning down there, among the sheep!'

We ate in silence ; I asked him nothing of his last adventures. I looked upon him as a dying man and curiosity seemed a profanation.

'Now it will be better that you should go, for we must move from hence.' He helped me to mount, patted Ali's neck and charged me for the last time : 'Remember those two things !'

For a long time as I went down the rocky slope, I saw him whenever I turned, standing on the highest stone of the *nuraghe*, waving his right arm slowly in the air as a last farewell. . . .

A month later I read in the papers that he had been killed, with three other companions, in a cavern, where for three days and three nights they had managed to defend themselves against a battalion of soldiers.

They tell how the Sorgonese called with loud cries to the captain in command of the operation, defying him to fight it out with him alone, but his defiance was not accepted. It was not found possible to get the better of those three fierce men but by smoking the entrance of the cavern, as it had been a fox's den.

Old Daniele, set at liberty again, was allowed to take away the body of his son, and to lay it to rest, up in the little churchyard of Sorgono amongst the chestnuts.

The prison gates were opened for Maddalena also. She has soon allowed herself to be comforted, however, and after hardly a year has granted her hand to a Campidanese, the proprietor of a fine vineyard. The three brothers that attended the other wedding with me shook their heads and took occasion to make comparisons between the women of the plain and the women of the mountain.

GUIDO VALENSIN.

AT LARGE¹

BY ARTHUR C. BENSON.

II.

CONTENTMENT.

I HAVE attempted of late, in more than one book, to depict a certain kind of tranquil life, a life of reflection rather than of action, of contemplation rather than of business; and I have tried to do this from different points of view, though the essence has been the same. I endeavoured at first to do it anonymously, because I have no desire to recommend these ideas as being my own theories. The personal background rather detracts from than adds to the value of the thoughts, because people can compare my theories with my practice, and show how lamentably I fail to carry them out. But time after time I have been pulled reluctantly out of my burrow, by what I still consider a wholly misguided zeal for publicity, till I have decided that I will lurk no longer. It was in this frame of mind that I published, under my own name, a book called '*Beside Still Waters*,' a harmless enough volume, I thought, which was meant to be a deliberate summary or manifesto of these ideas. It depicted a young man who, after a reasonable experience of practical life, resolved to retire into the shade, and who in that position indulged profusely in leisurely reverie. The book was carefully enough written, and I have been a good deal surprised to find that it has met with considerable disapproval, and even derision, on the part of many reviewers. It has been called morbid and indolent, and decadent, and half-a-hundred more ugly adjectives. Now I do not for an instant question the right of a single one of these conscientious persons to form whatever opinion they like about my book, and to express it in any terms they like; they say, and obviously feel, that the thought of the book is essentially thin, and that the vein in which it is written is offensively egotistical. I do not dispute the possibility of their being perfectly right. An artist who exhibits his paintings, or a writer who pub-

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lishes his books, challenges the criticisms of the public ; and I am quite sure that the reviewers who frankly disliked my book, and said so plainly, thought that they were doing their duty to the public, and warning them against teaching which they believed to be insidious and even immoral. I honour them for doing this, and I applaud them, especially if they did violence to their own feelings of courtesy and urbanity in doing so. Then there were some good-natured reviewers who practically said that the book was simply a collection of amiable platitudes ; but that if the public liked to read such stuff, they were quite at liberty to do so. I admire these reviewers for a different reason, partly for their tolerant permission to the public to read what they choose, and still more because I like to think that there are so many intelligent people in the world who are wearisomely familiar with ideas which have only slowly and gradually dawned upon myself. I have no intention of trying to refute or convince my critics, and I beg them with all my heart to say what they think about my books, because only by the frank interchange of ideas can we arrive at the truth.

But what I am going to try to do in this paper is to examine the theory by virtue of which my book is condemned, and I am going to try to give the fullest weight to the considerations urged against it. I am sure there is something in what the critics say, but I believe that where we differ is in this. The critics who disapprove of my book seem to me to think that all men are cast in the same mould, and that the principles which hold good for some necessarily hold good for all. What I like best about their criticisms is that they are made in a spirit of moral earnestness and ethical seriousness. I am a serious man myself, and I rejoice to see others serious. The point of view which they seem to recommend is the point of view of a certain kind of practical strenuousness, the gospel of push, if I may so call it. They seem to hold that people ought to be discontented with what they are, that they ought to try to better themselves, that they ought to be active, and what they call normal ; that when they have done their work as energetically as possible, they should amuse themselves energetically, too, take hard exercise, shout and play,

Pleased as the Indian boy to run
And shoot his arrows in the sun,

and that then they should recreate themselves like Homeric heroes, eating and drinking, listening comfortably to the minstrel, and take their fill of love in a full-blooded way.

That is, I think, a very good theory of life for some people, though I think it is a little barbarous: it is Spartan rather than Athenian.

Some of my critics take a higher kind of ground, and say that I want to minimise and melt down the old stern beliefs and principles of morality into a kind of nebulous emotion. They remind me a little of an old country squire of whom I have heard, of the John Bull type, whose younger son, a melancholy and sentimental youth, joined the Church of Rome. His father was determined that this should not separate them, and asked him to come home and talk it over. He told his eldest son that he was going to remonstrate with the erring youth in a simple and affectionate way. The eldest son said that he hoped his father would do it tactfully and gently, as his brother was highly sensitive, to which his father replied that he had thought over what he meant to say, and was going to be very reasonable. The young man arrived, and was ushered into the study by his eldest brother. 'Well,' said the squire, 'very glad to see you, Harry; but do you mean to tell me that your mother's religion is not good enough for a d——d ass like you?'

Now far from desiring to minimise faith in God and the Unseen, I think it is the thing of which the world is more in need than anything else. What has made the path of faith a steep one to tread is partly that it has got terribly encumbered with ecclesiastical traditions; it has been mended, like the Slough of Despond, with cartloads of texts and insecure definitions. And partly too the old simple undisturbed faith in the absolute truth and authority of the Bible has given way. It is admitted that the Bible contains a considerable admixture of the legendary element; and it requires a strong intellectual and moral grip to build one's faith upon a collection of writings, some of which, at all events, are not now regarded as being historically and literally true. 'If I cannot believe it all,' says the simple bewildered soul, 'how can I be certain that any of it is indubitably true?' Only the patient and desirous spirit can decide; but whatever else fades, the perfect insight, the Divine message of the Son of Man cannot fade; the dimmer that the historical setting becomes, the brighter shine the parables and the sayings, so far beyond the power of His followers to have originated, so utterly satisfying to our deepest needs. What I desire to say with all my heart is that we pilgrims need not be dismayed because the golden clue dips into darkness and mist; it emerges as bright as ever upon the upward slope of the valley.

If one disregards all that is uncertain, all that cannot be held to be securely proved in the sacred writings, there still remain the essential facts of the Christian revelation, and more deep and fruitful principles than a man can keep and make his own in the course of a lifetime, however purely and faithfully he lives and strives. To myself the doubtful matters are things absolutely immaterial, like the *débris* of the mine, while the precious ore gleams and sparkles in every boulder.

What, in effect, these critics say is that a man must not discuss religion unless he is an expert in theology. When I try, as I have once or twice tried, to criticise some current conception of a Christian dogma, the theological reviewer, with a titter that resembles the titter of Miss Squeers in 'Nicholas Nickleby,' says that a writer who presumes to discuss such questions ought to be better acquainted with the modern developments of theology. To that I demur, because I am not attempting to discuss theology, but current conceptions of theology. If the advance in theology has been so enormous, then all I can say is that the theologians fail to bring home the knowledge of that progress to the man in the street. To use a simple parable, what one feels about many modern theological statements is what the eloquent bagman said in praise of the Yorkshire ham: 'Before you know what you are, there—it's vanished!' This is not so in science; science advances, and the ordinary man knows more or less what is going on; he understands what is meant by the development of species, he has an inkling of what radio-activity means, and so forth; but this is because science is making discoveries, while theological discoveries are mainly of a liberal and negative kind, a modification of old axioms, a loosening of old definitions. Theology has made no discoveries about the nature of God, or the nature of the soul; the problem of free will and necessity is as dark as ever, except that scientific discovery tends to show more and more that an immutable law regulates the smallest details of life. I honour, with all my heart, the critics who have approached the Bible in the same spirit in which they approach other literature; but the only definite result has been to make what was considered a matter of blind faith more a matter of opinion. But to attempt to scare men away from discussing religious topics, by saying that it is only a matter for experts, is to act in the spirit of the Inquisition. It is like saying to a man that he must not discuss questions of diet and exercise because he is not acquainted with the *Pharmacopœia*, or that no one may argue

on matters of current politics unless he is a trained historian. Religion is, or ought to be, a matter of vital and daily concern for every one of us ; if our moral progress and our spiritual prospects are affected by what we believe, theologians ought to be grateful to anyone who will discuss religious ideas from the current point of view, if it only leads them to clear up misconceptions that may prevail. If I needed to justify myself further, I would only add that since I began to write on such subjects I have received a large number of letters from unknown people, who seem to be grateful to anyone who will attempt to speak frankly on these matters, with the earnest desire, which I can honestly say has never been absent from my mind, to elucidate and confirm a belief in simple and essential religious principles.

And now I would go on to say a few words as to the larger object which I have had in view. My aim has been to show how it is possible for people living quiet and humdrum lives, without any opportunities of gratifying ambition or for taking a leading part on the stage of the world, to make the most of simple conditions, and to live lives of dignity and joy. My own belief is that what is commonly called success has an insidious power of poisoning the clear springs of life ; because people who grow to depend upon the stimulus of success sink into dreariness and dullness when that stimulus is withdrawn. Here my critics have found fault with me for not being more strenuous, more virile, more energetic. It is strange to me that my object can have been so singularly misunderstood. I believe, with all my heart, that happiness depends upon strenuous energy ; but I think that this energy ought to be expended upon work, and everyday life, and relations with others, and the accessible pleasures of literature and art. The gospel that I detest is the gospel of success, the teaching that everyone ought to be discontented with their setting, that a man ought to get to the front, clear a space round him, eat, drink, make love, cry and strive, and fight. It is all to be at the expense of feebler people. That is a detestable ideal, because it is the gospel of tyranny rather than the gospel of equality. It is obvious, too, that such success depends upon a man being stronger than his fellows, and is only made possible by shoving and hectoring, and bullying the weak. The preaching of this violent gospel has done us already grievous harm ; it is this which has tended to depopulate country districts, to make people averse to discharging all honest subordinate tasks, to make men and women overvalue excitement

and amusement. The result of it is the lowest kind of democratic sentiment, which says 'everyone is as good as everyone else, and I am a little better,' and the jealous spirit, which says 'if I cannot be prominent, I will do my best that no one else shall be.' Out of it develops the demon of municipal politics, which makes a man strive for a place, in the hopes of being able to order things for which others have to pay. It is this teaching which makes power seem desirable for the sake of personal advantages, and with no care for responsibility. This spirit seems to me an utterly vile and detestable spirit. It tends to disguise its rank individualism under a pretence of desiring to improve social conditions. I do not mean for a moment to say that all social reformers are of this type; the clean-handed social reformer, who desires no personal advantage, and whose influence is a matter of anxious care, is one of the noblest of men; but now that schemes of social reform are fashionable, there are a number of blatant people who use them for purposes of personal advancement.

What I rather desire is to encourage a very different kind of individualism, the individualism of the man who realises that the hope of the race depends upon the quality of life, upon the number of people who live quiet, active, gentle, kindly, faithful lives, enjoying their work and turning for recreation to the nobler and simpler sources of pleasure—the love of nature, poetry, literature, and art. Of course the difficulty is that we do not, most of us, find our pleasures in these latter things, but in the excitement and amusement of social life. I mournfully admit it, and I quite see the uselessness of trying to bring pleasures within the reach of people when they have no taste for them; but an increasing number of people do care for such things, and there are still more who would care for them, if only they could be introduced to them at an impressionable age.

If it is said that this kind of simplicity is a very tame and spiritless thing, I would answer that it has the advantage of being within the reach of all. The reason why the pursuit of social advancement and success is so hollow, is that the subordinate life is after all the life that must fall to the majority of people. We cannot organise society on the lines of the army of a lesser German state, which consisted of twenty-four officers, covered with military decorations, and eight privates. The successful men, whatever happens, must be a small minority; and what I desire is that success, as it is called, should fall quietly and inevitably on the

heads of those who deserve it, while ordinary people should put it out of their thoughts. It is no use holding up an ideal which cannot be attained, and which the mere attempt to attain is fruitful in disaster and discontent.

I do not at all wish to teach a gospel of dulness. I am of the opinion of the poet who said :

Life is not life at all without delight,
Nor hath it any might.

But I am quite sure that the real pleasures of the world are those which cannot be bought for money, and which are wholly independent of success.

Everyone who has watched children knows the extraordinary amount of pleasure that they can extract out of the simplest materials. To keep a shop in the corner of a garden, where the commodities are pebbles and thistle-heads stored in old tin pots, and which are paid for in daisies, will be an engrossing occupation to healthy children for a long summer afternoon. There is no reason why that kind of zest should not be imported into later life ; and, as a matter of fact, people who practise self-restraint, who are temperate and quiet, do retain a gracious kind of contentment in all that they do or say, or think, to extreme old age ; it is the jaded weariness of over-strained lives that needs the stimulus of excitement to carry them along from hour to hour. Who does not remember the rigid asceticism of Ruskin's childhood ? A bunch of keys to play with, and a little later a box of bricks ; the Bible and the 'Pilgrim's Progress' and 'Robinson Crusoe' to read ; a summary whipping if he fell down and hurt himself, or if he ever cried. Yet no one would venture to say that this austerity in any way stunted Ruskin's development or limited his range of pleasures ; it made him perhaps a little submissive and unadventurous. But who that ever saw him, as the most famous art-critic of the day, being mercilessly snubbed, when he indulged in paradoxes, by the old wine merchant, or being told to hold his tongue by the grim old mother, and obeying cheerfully and sweetly, would have preferred him to have been loud, contradictory, and self-assertive ? The mischief of our present system of publicity is that we cannot enjoy our own ideas, unless we can impress people with them, or, at all events, impress people with a sense of our enjoyment of them. There is a noble piece of character-drawing in one of Mr. Henry James's novels, 'The Portrait of a Lady,' where Gilbert Osmond, a selfish dilettante, finding that he cannot make a

great success or attain a great position, devotes himself to trying to mystify and provoke the curiosity of the world by retiring into a refined seclusion, and professing that it affords him an exquisite kind of enjoyment. The hideous vulgarity of his attitude is not at first sight apparent; he deceives the heroine, who is a considerable heiress, into thinking that here, at last, is a man who is living a quiet and sincere life among the things of the soul; and having obtained possession of her purse, he sets up house in a dignified old palace in Rome, where he continues to amuse himself by inviting distinguished persons to visit him, in order that he may have the pleasure of excluding the lesser people who would like to be included.

This is, of course, doing the thing upon an almost sublime scale; but the fact remains that in an age which values notoriety above everything except property, a great many people do suffer from the disease of not enjoying things, unless they are aware that others envy their enjoyment. To people of an artistic temperament this is a sore temptation, because the essence of the artistic temperament is its egotism, and egotism, like the Bread-and-butter fly, requires a special nutriment, the nutriment of external admiration.

And here, I think, lies one of the pernicious results of an over-developed system of athletics. The more games that people play, the better; but I do not think it is wholesome to talk about them for large spaces of leisure time, any more than it is wholesome to talk about your work or your meals. The result of all the talk about athletics is that the newspapers get full of them too. That is only natural. It is the business of newspapers to find out what interests people, and to tell them about it; but the bad side of it is that young athletes get introduced to the pleasures of publicity, and that ambitious young men think that athletics are a short cut to fame. To have played in a University eleven is like accepting a peerage; you wear for the rest of your life an agreeable and honourable social label, and I do not think that a peerage is deserved, or should be accepted, at the age of twenty. I do not think it is a good kind of fame which depends on a personal performance rather than upon a man's usefulness to the human race.

The kind of contentment that I should like to see on the increase is the contentment of a man who works hard and enjoys work, both in itself and in the contrast it supplies to his leisure hours; and, further, whose leisure is full of varied interests, not only definite pursuits, but an interest in his relations with others, not only of a spectatorial

kind, but with the natural and instinctive desire to contribute to their happiness, not in a priggish way, but from a sense of cordial good-fellowship.

This programme may seem, as I have said, to be unambitious and prosaic, and to have very little that is stirring about it. But my belief is that it can be the most lively, sensitive, fruitful, and enjoyable programme in the world, because the enjoyment of it depends upon the very stuff of life itself, and not upon skimming the cream off and throwing away the milk.

My critics will say that I am only appearing again from my cellar, with my hands filled with bottled platitudes; but if they are platitudes, by which I mean plain and obvious truths, why do we not find more people practising them? What I mean by a platitude is a truth so obvious that it is devoid of inspiration, and has become one of the things that everyone does so instinctively, that no reminder of them is necessary. Would that it were so in the present case! All I can say is that I know very few people who live their lives on these lines, and that most of the people I know find inspiration anywhere but in the homely stuff of life. Of course there are a good many people who take life stolidly enough, and do not desire inspiration at all; but I do not mean that sort of life in the least. I mean that it ought to be possible and delightful for people to live lives full of activity, and perception, and kindness, and joy, on very simple lines indeed; to take up their work day by day with an agreeable sense of putting out their powers, to find in the pageant of nature an infinite refreshment, and to let art and poetry lift them up into a world of hopes and dreams, and memories; and thus life may become a meal to be eaten with appetite, with a wholesome appreciation of its pleasant savours, rather than a meal eaten in satiety or greediness, with a peevish repining that it is not more elaborate and delicate.

I do not claim to live my own life on these lines. I started, as all sensitive and pleasure-loving natures do, with an expectation of finding life a much more exciting, amusing, and delightful thing than I have found it. I desired to skip from peak to peak, without troubling to descend into the valleys. But now that I have descended, partly out of curiosity and partly out of inefficiency, no doubt, into the low-lying vales, I have found them to be beautiful and interesting places, the hedgerows full of flower and leaf, the thickets musical with the voices of birds, the orchards loaded with fruit, the friendly homesteads rich with tranquil life and abounding

in quiet friendly-people; and then the very peaks themselves, past which my way occasionally conducts me, have a beautiful solemnity of pure outline and strong upliftedness, seen from below, which I think they tend to lose, seen from the summit; and if I have spoken of the quieter joys, it is—I can say this with perfect honesty—because I have been pleased with them, as a bird is pleased with the sunshine and the berries, and sings, not that the passers-by may admire his notes, but out of simple joy of heart; and, after all, it is enough justification, if a pilgrim or two have stopped upon their way to listen with a smile. That alone persuades me that one does no harm by speaking, even if there are other passers-by who say what a tiresome note it is, that they have heard it a hundred times before, and cannot think why the stupid bird does not vary his song. Personally, I would rather hear the yellow-hammer utter his sharp monotonous notes, with the dropping cadence at the end, than that he should try to imitate the nightingale.

However, as I have said, I am quite willing to believe that the critics speak, or think they speak, in the interests of the public, and with a tender concern that the public should not be bored. And I will take my leave of them by saying, like Miss Flite, that I will ask them to accept a blessing, and that when I receive a judgment, I shall confer estates impartially.

But my last word shall be to my readers, and I will beg of them not to be deceived either by experts or by critics; on the one hand, not to be frightened away from speculating and reflecting about the possible meanings of life by the people who say that no one under the degree of a Bachelor of Divinity has any right to tackle the matter; and, on the other hand, I would implore them to believe that a quiet life is not necessarily a dull life, and that the cutting off of alcohol does not necessarily mean a lowering of physical vitality; but rather that if they will abstain for a little from dependence upon excitement, they will find their lives flooded by a new kind of quality, which heightens perception and increases joy. Of course souls will ache and ail, and we have to bear the burden of our ancestors' weaknesses as well as the burden of our own; but just as, in the physical region, diet and exercise and regularity can effect more cures than the strongest medicines, so, in the life of the spirit, self-restraint and deliberate limitation and tranquil patience will often lead into a vigorous and effective channel the stream that, left to itself, welters and wanders among shapeless pools and melancholy marshes.

WROTH.¹

BY AGNES AND EGERTON CASTLE.

CHAPTER III.

MRS. PANTON kept silence for the better part of the way. If she suspected her mistress's tears, silently shed in the darkness, she did not dare intrude upon them. It was only when Juliana stirred, sighed, and bent forward to the open window as if trying to pierce the gloom that Mrs. Panton began to give vent to her overcharged feelings: What could her ladyship think of her for having left her alone with that wicked nobleman and his wild beasts?

Her ladyship had thought nothing but that Mrs. Panton had obeyed orders.

This was not encouraging; but once started, the subject was too enthralling to be dropped.

"O, my lady, such an experience! The tales that Mr. Bertram has told me this night! The things we have seen, he says, is nothing to what goes on at times. His heart is broken over it all. A nice, civil-spoken, respectable old man as ever I came across! "And why do you stay?" (says I to him). "Stay?" says he, "why, I was born here," he says, "and I had my lord's father in my arms when he was born, and my lord himself! Stay?" he cries. "And if he were my own son," and his voice began to tremble, "he couldn't be dearer to my heart." "What! That hell-rake?" I says. "He is that," he groans. "Drunkard," says I. "No drunkard, ma'am, if he does drink too much now and again." "Gambler," I go on, "by what you tell me." "No gambler," he answers me in the same way, "though he plays deep, often, I'll not deny it." "With a black temper," I says, remembering his lordship's face, my lady, as he lugged that ravening brute of a wolf. "My poor boy," says Mr. Bertram, shaking his head, "he has that. But he's sadly crossed at times." "And a black heart," I let out. (I was getting warm and bold, my lady, with my feet on the fender, and a drop of lemon punch, hot. And it worried me that the old man should be so obstinate. Such a

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grand house, as it is. Mr. Bertram's own little room, fit for a prince ; all panelled ; that cosy ! And corridors you could drive a coach and four through. And the master of it all spending his life and his money on waste and wickedness, as Mr. Bertram told me, and as I could see for myself.) "A black heart," I says. "No," he cries, rising at me with a shout. "I'll not hear that word from mortal lips. No," he repeats, "foolish, misled, hot-blooded, but at heart he's good and sweet and sound. Aye, and who should know it better than myself who've never had an ill look from him all his life, not an ill word for all that I take it upon myself to rebuke him, forgetting my place and his as often as not ? Ma'am," he says to me then, "you'll not believe it, but no matter whom he has with him, he'll never sit to his dinner without giving me a glass of wine first. Pours it out himself and hands it to me as I stand behind his chair. 'There, my old Bertram,' he'll say——" The poor old man, my lady, the tears ran down his face as he spoke !

There was a pause. Juliana made no comment. Yet, had Mrs. Panton's narrative displeased, it would have been promptly checked, as the good woman knew ; she therefore took heart of grace and proceeded with fresh gusto, charmed that the sound of her own voice should beguile the tedium.

'I declare, my lady, you could not help pitying the poor old fellow. All among such a set of wild wastrels ! It was hardly a minute they would let him rest. Now it would be the footman in upon him (and an impudent lot they are !) for more wine out of the cellar for the gentlemen to drink in the dining-room. And a pretty set the gentlemen were, my lady, them as were dressed as monks, you know. We could hear them at it, shouting, singing, quarrelling ; and two or three of their valets would be coming in on us, too, wanting this and that for themselves. One of them, if you please, never could finish his supper without a glass of curaçao ! And another nips a bottle of port wine that was meant for his master—a Frenchman he was. "Port," he says, "English port and English ladies are what I like—not meaning you," he says, grinning at me like a monkey, "but the little misses. Not the big magnums long in bottle, but the little pints just fresh from the wood——" whatever he meant by that, my lady. I just rolled my eye at him ; I thank my Maker I can hold my own with any impudent foreigner. And then, when we might have settled at last to a quiet cosy talk, the old man got the fidgets—he was up

and running to the door every minute. And at last he went away and when he came back : " I have been listening in the sacristy," he said, " I thought your lady might be wanting something. But it's all right, all quiet in the church—only my lord and your lady talking, quite genteelly." " Ho ! " says I, looking at him hard, " and what did you think my lady might be wanting ? " At that he said nothing, but mopped his forehead, looking back at me piteous-like. " Ho ! " says I again, " you haven't that good opinion of your master after all," (asking your ladyship's pardon). And again he says nothing, but looks at me, till I couldn't but think of a baby going to cry. " Never fear," I says, to console him, " it would be a bold man " (again begging your ladyship's pardon) " as would offer rudeness to my lady."

Her mistress interrupted her sharply :

' You would have done better, Panton, to have left me out of your gossip.'

' My lady ! ' ejaculated the maid, much injured. ' Why,' she went on, ' I would not as much as mention your ladyship's name, nor breathe where we came from, or where we were going beyond Maidstone—and the post-boy had already told 'em that. The old man tried hard enough at first to find out. But, " no," I says, " my lady has no right to be here at all, and I'll not give her name to be bandied about, and made light with afterwards." " Ah," he says—he was a respectable, good old man—" Ah," he sighs, " you're right, ma'am ; the place is not fit for such as her, as I saw the instant I laid my eyes on her. You do well. These poor walls shouldn't as much as hear the echo of her name." '

The travelling chaise reached Maidstone in the small hours of the night. And when, after much waiting, Juliana at last obtained admittance at the posting inn, she dismissed Lord Wroth's servants and horses with a handsome gratuity and orders to return instantly to Hurley.

Through the remnant of the night in her hastily-prepared chamber, sleeping and waking, she was haunted by vivid-coloured visions of that fantastic hour at the abbey. The young pale face of Wroth rose ever before her, now kindled as with demoniac scorn and anger, now set in lines of high renunciation—through all beautiful. Again and again, as she stared, wide-eyed, into the darkness, she relived the extraordinary scenes. Again she was sitting in the high carven chair with the mysterious vastness and

gloom of the Abbey about her ; again he was kneeling by her, pouring his confession into her ear. She felt once more the fire of his sudden passion scorch her, while yet his spirituality was like the fanning of great wings that kept pure airs about her. But when ever and anon a snatch of sleep came upon her, dreams ran unbridled. Instead of seeking the great cup, his lips were drawing near hers ; but ever before they kissed she woke—except once, and then at the touch of his lips she found herself soaring in an ecstasy the like of which she had never conceived possible. It was the very ecstasy that broke the dream. Evil visions she had, too ; hauntings of slaving wolves, of bears hugely rearing, of dancing devil-monks, of a bat, scarlet-winged, circling in giddy rounds.

She was glad when the late dawn broke ; glad to hear Mrs. Panton's soft heavy tread upon the boards and to know that the reasonable dull day of ordinary life had started after this night of incredible experience.

She thought she could take up her ordered existence where she had left it. She had yet to learn that to the eyes that have been given certain revelations the whole world is changed. What the hour in the Abbey had begun her dreams had completed. Juliana's soul was inviolate no longer.

Notwithstanding the fatigues of the night, she insisted upon an early start and post-horses were ordered for the next stage, to Canterbury. There, at the *Fleur de Lys*, the goal of her journey was reached at last.

Mrs. Panton stood ostentatiously apart, sniffing high disapproval, while her mistress, before even bespeaking rooms, made enquiries which changed the landlady's first unctuous obsequiousness into amazement :

Was not one Miss Vaughan in the house ?

The hostess measured the traveller's distinguished appearance, shaking her head : she had no visitor of any quality staying there at present, no one likely to be known to the lady.

But the traveller insisted ; she had been informed, at Tunbridge Wells, and by the manager of the Thespis Company himself, that Miss Vaughan had been left at this hotel—Miss Vaughan, the young actress.

A scornful light of understanding broke upon the hostess' countenance.

Miss Vaughan ? Beljoy, Miss Beljoy was what the creature

had called herself to them. So, it was for no visitor of standing the lady was enquiring; but for the sick play-actress, the minx in the garret. Aye, indeed, she had been dropped into the *Fleur de Lys* by the strollers. A baggage! . . . and sick, into the bargain! Only a deep sense of Christian obligation had kept the landlady from turning her out into the street. And the girl was dying, they said; it was a bad thing for an inn to have a death in it. And those that had left her—on the sly, she might say—had not so much as left a guinea with her.

The good woman's eye brightened, however, as she talked; her somewhat slow wits worked—there was money in this new arrival or she did not know her business; and perhaps her Christian charity might not turn out so bad a speculation after all. Juliana broke in upon her verbiage:

'Take me to her,' she said in her quiet voice.

Juliana, Contessa Mordante di Belgiojoso, the young wife of an old husband, wielded great power in the extended circle of which she was mistress; childless, however, and with little taste for society, she had but one absorbing occupation: the care of the poor. In the wide, lonely estates near Florence, up in the mountains where most of her summers were spent—while by amicable consent the count ministered to his gout at Baden-Baden, or Bourbonne—she played Providence to his peasants, taught the children, started young couples in life, gave comfort alike to birth and death. So she had experience of misery and sickness.

As she stood in the squalid room that had been thought good enough for a strolling play-actress to die in, and looked down at the flushed, haggard face, she knew that here Death was not.

The girl, who had been dozing, started awake; and, at first, seemed to take her visitor for a terror of the fever, for she cried aloud and hid her eyes.

But Juliana spoke in soothing; and presently Peggy Vaughan, alias Miss Beljoy, turned eyes of amazement at her foster-sister. Juliana's gaze was misted over with that sorrow of hers that rarely knew tears.

'O, Peggy,' she said, 'my poor Peggy, whom I left a little merry girl! How have you come to this?'

Peggy knew that it was not to her bodily sickness the words referred, but to the deeper sickness of the soul. Anger rushed crimson to her face. She sat up with singular vigour:

'What do you want with me?' she cried. 'I never sent for you. What is it to you what I've come to? I've gone my own way, begged from nobody. I suppose a poor girl may be let die in peace, without being talked at.' She was shaken by a sudden spasm of coughing; and as Juliana supported her in her arms, the girl broke into gasping sobs, clutching at the kind hands. 'I don't want to die—I don't want to die!'

'But you're not dying, Peggy. No, my dear. See now, you're breathing quite easily; you never have been dying—not with those eyes and that pulse! (Panton, tell them to prepare a room next to mine, with a good fire.) I'm going to look after you, and make you well. (Do your hear, Panton?)'

Mrs. Panton, who stood watching in deep displeasure from the threshold, flung up her hands. But when her ladyship commanded in such a tone there was nothing for it but obedience.

As the door closed, Juliana sat down by the bed. And, bit by bit, poor Peggy was drawn to tell her story; the common sordid story. It was on no high wave of passion misplaced, no tide of artistic temperament, that she had gone to ground. She was sick of home, that was all. And Polly Lewis, from the village, had gone on the pantomime, and had made fine friends, and had gold and furs—aye, and diamonds. And then had come the money from Italy—

Juliana groaned:

'The money I sent you for your wedding clothes!'

Peggy's fevered lips broke into a smile, part mischief, part scorn. It was likely she would wed with that common farming chap and go on feeding chickens and milking cows the rest of her life—she who had twice the looks and forty times the spirits of Polly Lewis! She tossed her head against the dingy pillow with a conscious jerk, and reared her slender throat. Yes—she had taken the money from Italy and gone to London to join Polly. And she had had a good time. Her mouth quivered, as she spoke, and the long green eyes, in their morbid shadows, glowed at the memory.

Sad was Juliana as she watched. All that Peggy regretted was the passing of her good time. The girl had a sob in her throat as she went on. . . . The money had slipped away so fast—and Polly Lewis had proved a beast. Peggy had fallen from depth to depth; and then, at starvation point, had found a chance again. Miserable as it was, it was better than nothing, and would certainly have led to something good in the end. She had been noticed. She had a

friend, a gentleman, one of Polly's grand acquaintances. She paused with an ogle from which the other woman, in shame, averted her eyes.

Peggy shot a swift glance, full of cunning and observation, at her grand foster-sister, and choked back the words that were rising to her lips. She coughed. A strolling company on tour; it was a devilish life, all said and done. She had caught this cold and they had dropped her here, the beasts! And that slut, Rose Amoretta, was going to play her part at the Wells; and had stolen her green velvet mantle! Her voice rose into shrillness over this culminating offence and a new choking fit seized her. She caught the sheet to her mouth:

'There's blood on it again!' she screamed, and turned livid with the fear of death upon her.

A meek patient she proved thereafter. Juliana had her way with her, in spite of Mrs. Panton, whose simple creed it was that, if the Lord chose to remove from this world one who had disgraced her family, it was nothing short of sinful to interfere.

Out of the stuffy attic, away from the litter of crushed band-boxes and tawdry finery, from the broken iron bedstead and the billows of musty feather bed, to the gay little guest-chamber next Juliana's own, where the firelight danced on panelled walls and the chintz of the four-poster bed had a pattern of moss-rose buds—it was a huge step to convalescence in itself. Then came the doctor—a different person from the apothecary who had generously bled her gratis. A very nice old gentleman he seemed, with wise silver-rimmed spectacles and a snuff-box, who spoke of her case in such monstrous long words that Peggy was lost in mingled fear and pride. Altogether a not disagreeable time for the little strolling actress. Such a person of importance had she become! Such pretty wrappers of her rich foster-sister's were now hers to wear; such soft clean pillows to lie against, such succulent soups to swallow.

Like a cat, she stretched and curled, and licked her lips. Panton, who washed her briskly and brushed her hair flat with stern disapproving hands, was, it is true, a disconcerting element in this new existence; and so was the ever-lurking anxiety touching her own condition. Juliana had private talks with the physician and she had not repeated her assurance of swift recovery. At times Peggy would be seized with a cold sweat of apprehension; why should such an one as Juliana, the great lady, the severely good

woman, be so kind, so indulgent to such as she if it were not that she was dying ?

But the day came at last when Peggy was promoted to an arm-chair by the fire ; and, towards its dusky hour, when the only light in the room came from the glowing hearth, Juliana entered upon her, took seat by her side, and for a little while sat in silence. She had a bunch of white winter anemones in her hand and looked down at them, without speaking. Peggy knew she had something weighty to say ; her heart began to beat quickly. Then Juliana leaned forward and clasped the girl's thin fingers.

'My little foster-sister,' she said ; 'I have made up my mind ; I am going to carry you away with me to Italy. To the sunshine.'

'Can I not get well in England ?' asked Peggy, taken aback and pulling her hand away.

'Not with the winter coming on ; it is too great a risk. And I must go back. I have come a long way for your sake and stayed longer than I had intended. And my husband wants me.'

Peggy's green eyes grew round in the firelight. She drew her breath with a gasp.

'You came for me ?' In her heart she thought her foster-sister a mighty fool. How little would she have cared what became of Peggy, had she been Juliana !

'I came when I got that letter from your mother—that letter in which she told me, at last, of her deep trouble about you.'

Peggy tossed her head.

'I heard from her again to-day,' went on the grave, soft voice, 'and she is so happy again now, Peggy, to know you safe with me. I have told her that I should take you away to the blue sky and the warm air. There will be roses where we are going—roses in December ! And you will get well and strong.'

The girl pondered. Certainly with these shaking limbs and this swimming head she could never dance a jig, with these husky notes ring out an impudent lilt. She required a great deal of care still, and comfort about her and rest—she knew that—if she was to be fit for anything again. But there was her friend—he who was a real fashionable gentleman, who was so seductive, and had such a way with him and lived among such fine folk, lords, and that ! Peggy had never seen anyone more to her fancy, so far—to be whisked suddenly out of the country, without the possibility even of seeing him again first ! The thought was altogether displeasing. But if she did not go, what then ? She had no illusions about her

position in his regard ; worn and hollow-eyed she would meet with little favour. She was a merry little devil, he had told her once and again, and that was what he liked her for.

But Juliana was a terribly righteous person to live with.

‘ Shall I become well and strong—in Italy ? ’ Peggy asked at length, pondering.

‘ Yes,’ said Juliana, ‘ well and strong . . . and good,’ she went on after a little pause : ‘ And in the summer you can come home again. Oh, Peggy, you’ll be glad to get into your mother’s arms—’

When she was well and strong—and good ! Peggy was a girl of rapid decision. She knew instantly what part of the programme she would carry out, what part neglect. The fire-glow was falling ; the great lady, lost in her benevolent plans, failed to see the contemptuous smile that twisted the pretty, pale, impudent face as her *protégée* at last dropped her demure consent.

‘ If you please, my lady—’ Panton held an open letter in her hand ; indignation breathed from her countenance. ‘ I have found something that you ought to know of. Who does your ladyship think that rascal post-boy was ordered to kidnap yonder awful night of the tenebree, or whatever he called it ? ’

Juliana scarcely glanced up from her needle. She drew her brows together.

‘ Dated Hurley Abbey, if you please ; from one of those crazy young gentlemen that were raging round as monks. Listen, my lady : “ Pretty Peggy, it is all arranged ; scream as much as you like to keep up the farce. . . . ” ’

‘ What is that ? ’ interrupted Juliana, with sudden sharpness.

‘ A letter, my lady, a letter. I come across it just now, as I was packing up that minx’s flithers—’

‘ Panton, for shame ! How shall we teach the poor child to go straight if honest people do such crooked things ? Her letter ! Take it back this instant where you found it. No—I’ll not hear another word ! And besides, what does it matter now ? ’

Mrs. Panton, no whit abashed, turned the purloined missive over and over between her large finger and thumb.

‘ Martindale, the young gentleman’s name is,’ she pursued stolidly. ‘ And a pretty young gentleman he must be ! And fine goings on they seem to have had already ! “ A kiss to my pert Peg ! ”—Peg ! . . . I’d peg the pertness out of her ! ’

‘ Panton, be silent ! ’ cried Juliana, impatient laughter struggling

with severity. But Panton had not been Juliana's nurse for nothing. Her little eyes gleamed with sudden fury :

'And your ladyship is going to take that piece to Italy with you ? Into your own house ! And you think, with coddling and petting, and smiling on her, you'll turn her good ? That sort will always be in mischief if there's a man within a mile. Your ladyship thinks she's repentant ? She's laughing in her sleeve already ! Nurse her back to life ! A warming up of vipers, I say. Pretty use she'll make of her health ! I shouldn't be doing my duty, if I didn't warn you.'

Juliana turned pale ; there was an earnestness about Panton that impressed her in spite of herself. And, as much in rebuke for her own want of faith as for her woman's want of charity, she exclaimed in reproach :

'And where does God come in ?'

'He does not come in at all,' said Panton with much directness ; 'not with Peggy Vaughan !' And with a last shake of the letter she left the room.

Juliana remained lost in deep reflection. The memory locked away in her heart, as something at once too troubling and too entrancing for deliberate thought, had been intruded upon with this rough and common touch. It hurt her ; and, at the same time it alarmed her that it should hurt so much.

And Panton's warning troubled and would not be dismissed. When we reach Italy, when we are home, she said to herself, trying to hush the uneasy voice within her, all will be well again. Italy, home, the ordered life, the protection of her husband's presence against herself—peace !

CHAPTER IV.

IN the great state bedchamber at Torre di Montemuscoli, the mountain castel where he had been born, Cesare Mordante, Conte di Belgiojoso dei Vespi, lay dying. Juliana his wife sat in the shadow of the bed curtains, waiting. It was full summer heat without : a white glow, beneath which the whole land seemed to simmer and vibrate. But within those walls of stone, ten feet thick and more, there was a still, cool atmosphere, unaffected by the seasons, like that of some antique church. Logs were even

smouldering on the wide hearth, for the lord was cold with an ever-deepening chill, and had liked to look upon the glimmer of red in the dimness of the room. Curtains were drawn across the cavernous window embrasures.

The sick man was dozing. Through the shadows, Juliana's eye, attuned to the gloom, could distinguish the emaciated, ivory white head propped against the pillows; the long, thin outline under the canopy. Facing the bed there hung a great crucifix frowning down upon her—mediæval, Gothic, terrible; image of a God done to death by sinners, no mild Christ dying to save! The golden wasps, badge of the family, gleamed out of the crimson brocade that here and there concealed the bare stone of the walls. Words of the ancient family motto, graven into the high chimney hood, leaped capriciously into light with every flicker of the sucking woodflame; now *Mordet*, now *Gaudens*, now *Vespa*. One hand, inert as death itself, lay very close to her on the counterpane. This was the last Mordante di Belgiojoso dei Vespi—the last of the brilliant, restless, fierce and handsome race, deadly to its enemies, fatal to its friends, flashing through the sunshine of life with as daring a joy as the winged stinging thing it had accepted as its badge. It had been the pride of all the Mordanti to live up to their Motto: *Mordet Vespa Gaudens*.

The irony of it pierced her as she sat and watched. An old man dying—all that was left. There was a complete stillness, save for the faint licking of the flame, the dull humming of the flies high in the vaulted ceiling and the faintly hissing breath from the bed sometimes singularly rapid, sometimes stopping altogether, sometimes broken as with a little click of the machinery that was running down so fast. It must have been close on noon, but Juliana had no notion how long she had sat, watching, waiting. Ever since those solemn ceremonies of the Church, which the Count had accepted this morning with an air of polite acquiescence not unmingled with humour, she had not left him.

The heavy peasant priest, who had lived all his years at Montemuscoli in much fear of its master, had ministered and been dismissed with the Count's most determined courtesy. After the majestic function, he had made his clumsy bow towards the bed and had wished the dying man a good recovery—at which the latter had smiled a fine far-off smile.

'*Ma*, if God wills otherwise,' had supplemented the padre, 'then to heaven!' And even as he said it, he had broken into

perspiration as his own temerity, and flung a piteous eye at grave Juliana, his comrade in the ministration of so much charity. But the Count had, for his words, another smile which haunted the priest all his way back to the village.

Thereafter old Mordante would have none by him but his young wife. He was in no pain; was very comfortable; but tired, tired, dissolving with weariness! Juliana knew it was the end, for the great doctor from Florence, who was now comfortably occupied at his midday meal in the adjoining room, had told her so without circumlocution: it is bad for a physician's reputation to allow unfounded hopes. The gout had gone to Count Mordante's stomach: he would pass like a burned-out candle.

In that air, already death-tainted, hung incense mixed with the sharp pungency of the essences with which the patient's forehead had been bathed, when he had turned a little faint, after his elaborate morning toilet. The silence, the dimness, the oppressive atmosphere, the brooding sense of dull expectation, all combined to weigh heavily on Juliana's energies. She had not slept that night, did not feel as if she could ever sleep again, but she was dazed. For months she had fought against the obsession of memory, battling even in her dreams with its dangerous allurements. Now it seemed as if in lassitude she could fight no longer. Her thoughts slipped away from her; ever and again she was back in the desecrated abbey of Lady's Grace at that midnight hour, when, with the deep shadows about her, amid the sighs of the crumbling walls, she had met and lost the first and only romance of her life. She caught herself back with fierce anger, with loathing of herself; that at this hour of all hours she should fail! She tried to pray, to turn her heart to sorrow: the old man had been very good to her. She must not—heaven drive the infamy from her!—would not let her mind rest for an instant on what freedom might mean. Yet—he of the red-brown eyes was with her, in the very chamber of Death, he was kneeling by her chair, whispering into her ear, his presence seemed to enfold her.

'Juliana . . .'

She started with a fierce leap of the heart. Out of the shadows, under the spreading canopy, the dying man was watching her. His eyes were terribly dark in a face which seemed to have shrunk even since she had last looked on it and to be investing itself ever more with the hue of clay. On his lips was that faint, strange smile, mysterious, ironic; that smile which had once been for

many a woman's undoing, and was now so troubling on a countenance of death. She bent over him, anguish in her gaze.

'You are worse! Your hand is ice. I shall call the doctor——'

The stiff fingers slowly closed on hers; she felt the chill of them run to her heart.

'Neither doctor nor priest—only you. Draw back the curtains, it grows very dark; I want to see you a last time.'

The sentences were short—for he had small breath—but distinct. His mind, through the dissolution of the flesh, shone unnaturally clear. After yesterday's physical agony this peace was wonderfully grateful to him; yet it was this peace, this rest, this freedom from pain that spelt the end.

Moving as one in a dream, she went to the windows and flung back the folds. Into the great room struck shafts of vivid light; upon one of them, through the open casement, a wasp sailed in singing, fierce and gay. It circled about Juliana's dark head as she returned to the bed.

Mordante was still smiling. Her heart swelled with a suffering like to none she had ever suffered; yet she had no tears.

'You are a very beautiful woman,' said the extinguished voice, 'beautiful and calm. It always pleased me, your calm.'

She could find no word for him. His attitude towards the dread moment paralysed her. It was not the pagan's stoicism, not the Christian's courage; it was merely indifference. Her soul cried out for the priest, for the comfort of those words she had heard at her mother's passing: 'Into thy hands, O Lord!' But for him, how could they be said? He was going as the leaf goes from the tree, it seemed, as lightly, as naturally to earth. But the spirit that looked forth indomitably alive from the dimming eyes: whither?

Again her hand, pulsing with warm life, sought his. He could no longer return the pressure. The great sleep was creeping upwards steadily; but he could still look and speak.

'*Cara*, I make no apologies. I might have afflicted you with a wheeled chair——' His smile flickered, faded, renewed itself. 'The last Mordante! The last—you will pass on the wealth only.' His lips drooped, she had to bend closer to catch the words. 'Juliana, you will have beautiful children!'

She thought he was wandering, and, for the first time, had the smart of tears in her eyes. Her poor old husband, had he, in his heart, dreamed of that?

But the next instant his gaze was full upon her, lucid, ironic, amused. It seemed as if he had read her thought; and even before his dying gaze she blushed. He made a supreme effort, always smiling:

'You will marry again, *Amor, Amor* . . . Your life, Juliana, begins where mine ends. Eh,' he cried of a sudden, shrilly, 'there is a wasp about your hair! Have a care of the sting!'

His eyeballs, upturned, fixed themselves. There was a vast moment of silence, into which the wasp sang. Then Cesare Mordante, Conte di Belgiojoso dei Vespi, closed his eyes and breathed once as in unspeakable comfort. It was the last sigh of a great race. On his lips the smile was set.

It was night, after that day of irrevocable event, and she who alone now of all the world had the right to the name of Mordante came slowly from her long vigil by the dead into the room known through long usage as the Count's study. She went steadily to the great chair where, to her knowledge, no one had ever sat but her husband. Candles were burning on the top of the secretaire, casting a narrow circle of yellow, promptly swallowed up by the surrounding gloom. On the tapestry hangings glimmered here and there the gold of the embroidered wasps. As Juliana sank into the chair, the feelings that had been seething in her ever since the moment of his passing suddenly took the form of a resolve. This death was not freedom for her, but rather the seal of immutable union. Henceforth it was her fate to sit in his place, to uphold his name, administer his fortune, cherish his people. Else was she nothing but the woman who, by her husband's deathbed, had been lost in thought of another man; who amid the sighs of the departing had rejoiced at the prospect of liberty; who could even now find no tear with which to mourn him who had been to her kind friend, great gentleman, from the moment he had set her by his side. A calmness, a curious strength, succeeded the torments of self-reproach upon the taking of this decision. Her life lay before her as a road, straight and white; marked with tall cypresses that rigidly pointed upwards—shapes of inexorable duty. But she felt courage enough for the lonely way: even to-night she would set her feet upon the first step. She had work before her which must be done.

Early that morning, while waiting for the priest's arrival, Mordante had given her a few concise instructions. Now she

was to be mistress of castle and estate, all authority was to emanate from her : he told her where to find his last letter of directions.

Swift in Italy is the passage from the deathbed to the tomb. She had already wasted over much time in prayer and self-searching. Yet, with the key in the lock, she paused again upon her task. It was strange how his living presence seemed to haunt this room ; seemed to be so much more vividly with her now than that marble figure beyond, with its faint mocking smile.

Witty company had Cesare Mordante always been ; though his wit had a sting in it, as suited his motto. She had seen him angry, once or twice, with swift and terrible anger that struck instantly. And mocking, humorously interested in life, cynically amused with others' weakness, she had always known him. A phrase, that had once fallen upon her ear in a crowded Florence salon, recurred to her mind : 'Listen to Mordante laughing—that means that some one has been stung !' But never for her, her heart cried out, had there been anger or derision ; for her, never anything but an exquisite courtesy and gentleness. Memories of his generosity, of his patience, rushed back upon her, gratefully. When had his indulgence failed her, even to the furtherance of her most lavish charities—charities for which he had little sympathy, in which she knew herself indiscriminate—even to the toleration in his house, in her intimacy, of the poor English waif, Peggy ? Juliana sighed and opened the bureau.

Uppermost in the drawer lay a large sealed sheet, directed to herself. She broke the seal with steady hands and read.

A long letter ; the slender writing ran like the lines of a poem between wide margins :

'*Cara amica*,' it began 'when you read this you will be in the possession of your well-deserved reward for patience and virtue. You have done me great honour, Juliana, and I have fully appreciated it. Ser Vespasiano Santucci will bring you my testament and you will see that everything I have to leave is yours. Even those annuities which a sense of duty has imposed upon me I have preferred to leave to your discretion, well knowing that you will place my honour higher than any other consideration. The amount of the suggested annuity is fixed in each case, with, I beg you to believe, the most accurate discrimination.

'Among the names submitted to your wisdom and generosity there is one which will surprise you. I pray you be neither too much scandalised nor distressed, but rather to take to heart, dear Juliana, two facts to which you are at present, in your youth and incredible goodness, dangerously blind :

'Firstly, men have formed conventions of honour to suit their own nature ; and therefore the conduct of a husband may sometimes prove the exact opposite of what he requires from his wife, without his being, on that account, either heartless or false to the name of gentleman. Imbue yourself well, my dear, with

this truth, before that second marriage in which I sincerely wish you so much satisfaction.

'The second fact will impress itself, I fear, somewhat heavily upon you: to confide in the repentance of a young and pretty sinner is to court disaster. And beware how you ever admit such an one again under the conjugal roof. I make the less apology for this revelation, for that I know it will materially assist you to banish your grief—that grief, I mean, which an over-sensitive conscience would probably lead you to cultivate for the memory of an old man who found so much content in your beauty and goodness, after an existence too well acquainted with beauty and wickedness.

'Your lovely eyes were never made for tears; all the better, *dolce amica*, if you shed none for me. Nevertheless, it is in deep sincerity that I conclude by assuring you that the proudest of my titles was to be called your husband.

'CESARE MORDANTE, Conte di Belgiojoso dei Vespi.'

Juliana read; and, bewildered, read again. Then the blood rushed to her face. She crumpled the sheet in her fingers and dropped her arms by her side. Foolish indeed not to have understood at first perusal such clear statements.

Enough seven years of marriage had taught her of what had been the ethics of her husband's life. But with Count Belgiojoso's past, she had proudly told herself, she had no concern, and she had never dreamed of suspecting his present.

'One name may surprise you. . . .' 'To confide in the repentance of a young and pretty sinner. . . .' 'Beware how you admit such an one again under the conjugal roof.' Too vilely plain was it whose name she was to find added to the shameful list! Under the conjugal roof, and he an old man! Dying, the wasp had stung, and oh, the sting was in her heart!

In the first spasm of her pain, she had no room for the thought of the miserable creature through whom the wound had been dealt to her. Since she could not mourn her dead as widowed women should, all that had been left her had been respect, gratitude. Now—this letter seemed a planned insult. The charge it imposed, the confidence is expressed, was no honour, but a cynic's posthumous outrage on a wife's dignity.

Moved by an unreasoned impulse, she hastened back to the death-chamber, still clenching the sheet. She felt she must seek to read upon the dead face some answer to the enigma. From the very threshold, the icy peace of the room rebuked her rushing entrance. The curtains were all drawn back close to the four posts of the bed; at its foot had been placed a table bearing the awful crucifix between two candles. In the middle of the room kneeled an old woman servant, and beside her two nuns; she had

a veil over her head, as if in the sacramental presence. All three rose as Juliana entered and respectfully retired. But, as she passed out, old Zia Vanna shot an inquisitive glance at her mistress. Juliana marked that her eyes were as dry as her own : was there no one to weep for the dead man ?

The young widow waited till the door closed upon the demure footsteps, the jingling rosaries ; then she lifted a candle, and, stepping to the head of the bed, stood gazing down.

The light fell on the old face : it looked like yellow wax—a mere mask of worn-out humanity. The smile on the lips seemed to put her and her passionately storming heart, her heaving pride, her anger, at an infinitely remote distance. Here was one who had known more truly than most men the emptiness of life, and had chosen to smile rather than weep. He lay now in his great peace, serenely ironic ! What of her trouble—what of its futility ? So runs the world : nothing lasts.

‘Why do you complain ?’ the dead lips seemed to ask. ‘Of my care in sparing you a misplaced grief ?’ And, once again, the gasping whisper was in her ear : ‘Your life begins where mine ends . . .’ No, this letter was not a treacherous stroke from the shelter of the grave ; rather was it a deliberate, inhuman unselfishness—the last act of a relentlessly philosophic mind, whose knowledge of woman’s nature was as profound as it was cynical. It was the sign-manual giving her freedom.

As Juliana bent, studying the features of the dead, she understood ; but with this complete understanding came also a complete severance. As far removed as her warm leaping life was from his rigid immobility, so was every aspiration of her ardent soul from that denying spirit. She had vowed but a few minutes ago to devote herself to an honoured memory. Now, she knew that the remainder of her life would scarce suffice to wipe away this hour of initiation and bring a wholesome forgetfulness.

The chill that belonged to the corpse seemed suddenly to strike to her veins : she moved quickly away without even a last glance. That smile was abhorrent ; it seemed to murder all that was divine within her. She felt she could not quickly enough go forth, believe again, hope again, know warmth and kindly folly. But, as she replaced the candle beside the crucifix, she paused, minded of the crushed paper in her grasp : one thing she had yet to do.

She held his last letter to the flame, and, as it flared up, cast

it on the cold hearth and stood watching till the last charred and curling flake settled into repose.

'Now it is finished,' said she to herself, and went out—feeling as she closed the door of the death-chamber that she had closed it on a phase of her life.

To sleep would have been impossible. A fierce white flame seemed to burn in her brain, under which her future lay mapped out in new and startling tints, while her own nature stood suddenly revealed in hitherto unsuspected lights and shades. The sense of being watched by the household ; the oppression of the great walls shutting her in, became suddenly unendurable : she felt she must out into the free air, into the wide night to think her new thoughts unhampered, her wide free thoughts.

Standing at last in the deep blue of the night upon the terrace, with airs of velvet softness about her and the wide-scented peace of the gardens falling away below, she drew a long breath. With a sigh as of ineffable comfort, Cesare Mordante had welcomed death. Now with even such a sigh, his young widow gave welcome to her new existence.

She sat down on a marble bench, and found herself smiling : she had not known herself so hard. What was the dead man to her now, but the man who had degraded his age, the house they had shared in common, the very sacredness of death. She had not known herself so proud ; nor had she known herself so capable of joy, ever even guessed at the strength of her own youth and her own yearning for life. She was free ! It was as if the shutters had been flung back in her soul and the light came pouring in ; as if the bars of the cage had been broken, and the bird was taking flight, strong-winged. And now the voice to which she had so long denied a hearing could pour out its music, unrebuked : 'To-night I am soaring with you . . . Our spirits are mates . . . Our souls kiss.'

Nothing now need keep her from the thought of him, this swift lover of hers, with the beauty of the fallen angel and the lofty spirit that could meet her on the heights ; of the man who had seen her and forthwith loved her as the poet loves his vision ; who, for the boon of one hour of her presence, had consecrated to her his whole existence.

Now, in the wondrous Italian night, she bade the haunting mysterious presence return to her. 'Italy, the land of Juliet, the land of Beatrice . . . you bring her music on your tongue,

her skies in your glance, her night glory in your hair ! . . . You have her love in your veins.'

She gave herself to his words. She stretched out her arms. Before another summer had burned itself out they should stand together here ; together breathe that air, softer than caresses, balmy, warm, spiced, the breath of love. Together they should look down upon those lilies, ranks of silver ghosts against the cypress walk ; and together they would count those cypress shapes—black sentinels upreared against this sky of unspeakable beauty, of indescribable tint : shimmering amethyst over-head, sapphire of immeasurable depth on the horizon.

And then, as their gaze wandered upwards, there would swim into their vision, even as now into her entranced eye, this exquisite crescent of waning moon, and they would see yonder faint pulse of dawn throbbing in the East, crowning their perfect night with the promise of the long day.

(To be continued.)

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